

Figure 21: Target illumination view from European specification mfg. 2, high beam

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	Euro Spec Manufacturer 2 - Low Beam					Target
	researcher					Illumination
Target	2	4	1	5	3	(Lux)
1	2	2	2	2	2	15.90
2	0	1	1	2	1	4.01
3	2	2	2	2	2	14.44
4	2	2	2	2	2	9.83
5	2	2	2	2	2	7.08
6	0	1	0	0	0	3.44
7	0	0	0	0	0	3.02
8	0	0	0	0	0	2.68
9	0	0	0	0	0	2.05
10	0	0	0	0	0	1.48
11	0	0	0	0	0	0.95
12	0	0	0	0	0	0.89
13	0	0	0	0	0	0.39
average	0.71				average	5.09
SUM	**46**				**SUM**	**66.16**

Figure 22: Target perception and illumination scores European mfg. 2 low beam

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	Euro Spec Manufacturer 2 - High Beam					Target
	researcher					Illumination
Target	2	4	1	5	3	(Lux)
1	2	2	2	2	2	32.15
2	1	2	2	2	2	8.34
3	2	2	2	2	2	40.08
4	2	2	2	2	2	24.50
5	2	2	2	2	2	16.05
6	0	2	2	1	2	8.69
7	0	2	2	0	2	7.56
8	0	2	1	0	1	6.52
9	0	0	0	0	0	4.70
10	0	0	0	0	0	3.57
11	0	0	0	0	0	2.47
12	0	0	0	0	0	2.06
13	0	0	0	0	0	1.22
average	1.02				average	12.15
SUM	**66**				**SUM**	**157.91**

Figure 23: Target perception and illumination scores European mfg. 2, high beam

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4.4.1 Illumination values measured at targets

The following table summarizes the illumination values in lux measured with a calibrated light meter at each target. Measurements were recorded for all four test vehicles for both low beam and high beam operation.

	Low beam	High beam
U.S. mfg. 1	103.90	141.48
Euro mfg. 1	96.70	151.21
U.S. mfg. 2	62.17	133.31
Euro mfg. 2	66.16	157.91

U.S. low beam average	83.0
U.S. high beam average	137.4
Euro low beam average	81.4
Euro high beam average	154.6

Euro low to U.S. low	**-1.9%**
Euro high to U.S. high	**12.5%**

Figure 24: Summary values for target illumination (lux)

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5 Inquiry #2: How do U.S. and European specification headlamps differ in producing glare?

5.1 Objective

Evaluate the glare produced by U.S. automatic high beam headlights and ADB capable European specification headlamp systems when approaching a vehicle traveling in the opposite direction on a two-lane road.

5.2 Methodology

The de Boer scale was utilized to quantify distraction glare resulting from U.S and European specification headlamp systems. The five (5) AAA researchers that gave subjective feedback in Section 4.2.2 also participated in this evaluation.

All testing was conducted on a closed-course asphalt test lane approximately 1,300 feet long and 30 feet wide. A static observation vehicle was parked at one end of the evaluation section. The left side of the observation vehicle was parked approximately eight (8) feet laterally offset from the left side of the dynamic test vehicle during its approach. The low beam headlights of the stationary observation vehicle were engaged to provide stimulus to the headlamp system of the test vehicle, and the vehicle engine was idled to provide consistent voltage to the headlamps.

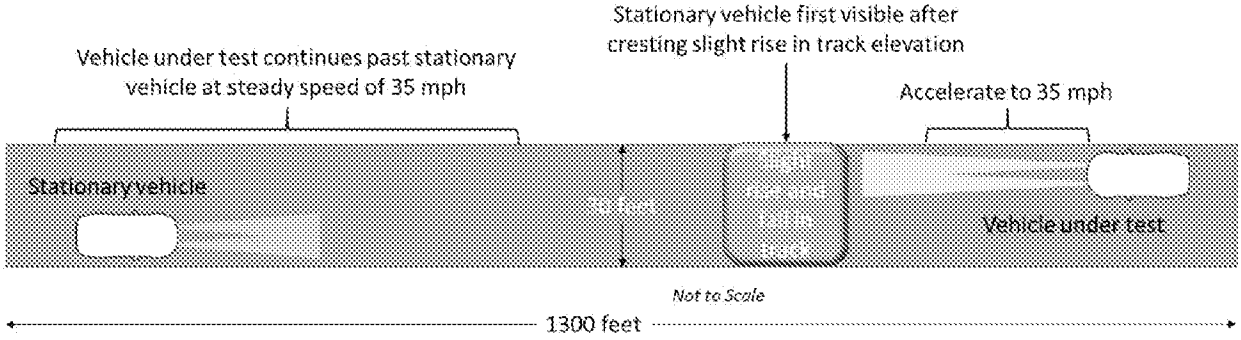


Figure 25: Schematic of drive-by glare test

From the opposite end of the test lane, the test vehicle was accelerated to a steady-state speed of 35 mph approaching the slight rise and fall in the test track. At a steady-state speed of 35mph, the test vehicle crested the slight hill and proceeded 760 feet on level surface past the stationary vehicle. Glare

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produced by the oncoming test vehicle was evaluated by participants sitting in the driver's front seat position of the observation vehicle.

This scenario replicated typical headlamp illumination from oncoming vehicles being transmitted through the windshield. The seating position of researchers in the static vehicle assured realistic positioning of the test participant's body and head relative to the roadway and test vehicle. Test participants were instructed to direct their gaze straight down the test lane rather than focusing on the approaching headlamp beam. This simulated typical driver behavior when encountering oncoming traffic.

Once the test vehicle passed the observation vehicle, participants rated glare according to the de Boer scale. Possible values consisted of integers between one (1) and nine (9). A value of one (1) corresponds to Unbearable glare, while a score of nine (9) corresponds to Just Noticeable glare. Video of each pass was captured for post-processing and analysis.

U.S. vehicles were evaluated with the headlamp automatic high beam system engaged. European specification vehicles were evaluated with the ADB system engaged. The test speed of 35 mph was sufficient to enable both automatic high beam switching and ADB system functionality for all test vehicles.

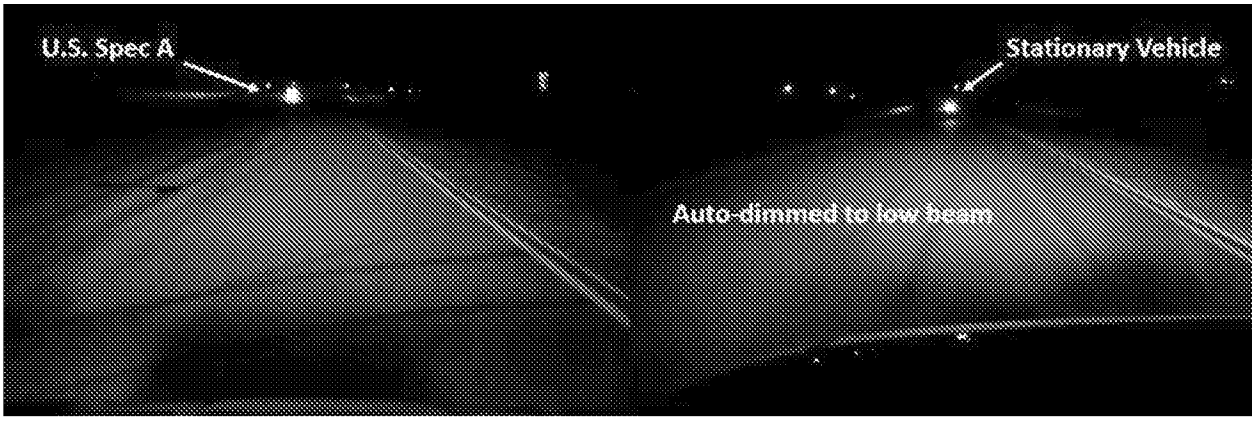


Figure 26: U.S. Specification Mfg. 2 Glare Drive-by with Headlamps Auto-dimmed to Low Beam

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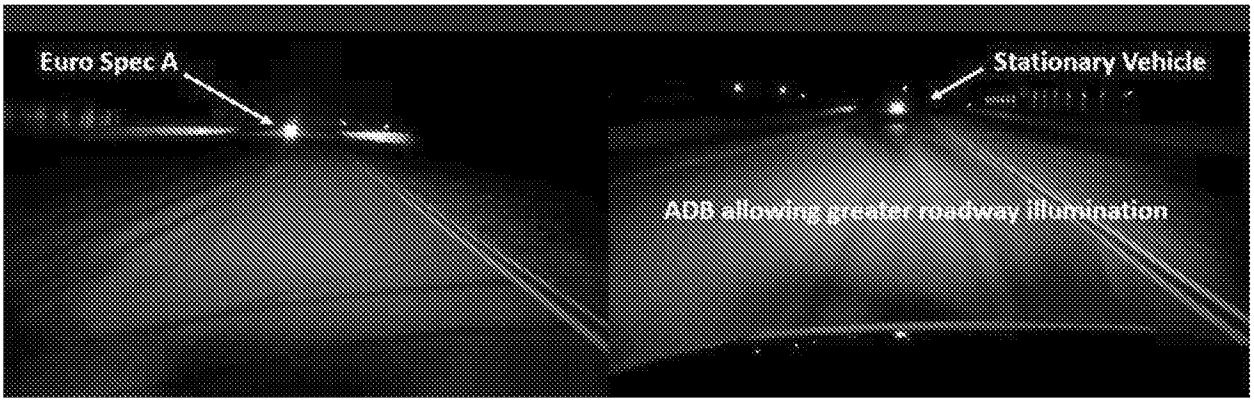


Figure 27: European Specification Mfg. 2 Glare Drive-By with Headlamps in ADB mode

5.3 Key Findings

All four test vehicles scored in the range of the evaluation scale indicating a low perceived glare. Ratings ranging from "Satisfactory" to "Just Acceptable". One manufacturer's European specification vehicle scored better than its U.S. specification counterpart did. Results for the other manufacturer's vehicles were reversed.

5.4 Vehicle/Component Specific Results

The European specification, manufacturer 1 vehicle with ADB headlamps had an average score of seven. This was slightly better than the U.S. specification, manufacturer 1 vehicle with an average score of six. This aligned with the real time impressions of the panelists who felt that the European specification, manufacturer 1 vehicle with ADB headlamps produced less glare than the U.S. specification, manufacturer 1 vehicle.

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Glare Evaluation (de Boer scale)

researcher	U.S. mfg 2	Euro mfg 2	U.S.mfg 1	Euro mfg 1
2	8	7	7	9
4	5	6	6	7
1	8	4	6	7
5	8	5	5	7
3	7	6	6	5
average	7.2	5.6	6	7
SUM	**36**	**28**	**30**	**35**

1 Unbearable
2
3 Disturbing
4
5 Just Acceptable
6
7 Satisfactory
9 Just Noticeable

Glare rated from 1 to 9, with 1 = **Unbearable**, and a 9 = **Just Noticeable**

Figure 28: Glare Evaluation (dynamic test)

The European specification, manufacturer 2 vehicle with ADB lamps first dimmed at a reasonable distance from the target car with the panelists. When the European specification, manufacturer 2 specification was within approximately 20 meters[5] of the target car, the panelists inside were subjected to a momentary increase of glare. This visible glare was experienced by nearly all of the panelists. Review of video timed the increase in glare at approximately one second, and was consistent over three trials. This momentary increase in glare was reflected in the evaluation scores. The U.S. specification, manufacturer 2 vehicle average score was 7.2, while the European specification, manufacturer 2 ADB average score was lower at 5.6. The lower score is almost entirely attributable to the late "flare" of light as the European specification vehicle came close to the stationary vehicle with the panelists. It should be noted that while late flare was noticed in this specific test, it was not noticed during the test evaluations on public roads in either ADB equipped vehicle.

[5] Distance estimate based on review of video.

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6 Inquiry #3: How do U.S. and European specification Headlamps Differ in Dynamic Roadway Illumination?

6.1 Objective

Compare the roadway illumination and glare of U.S. and European specification headlamps while driving on both a closed course and public roadways.

6.2 Methodology

Test vehicles were evaluated on a closed-course circuit and a predetermined route on public roadways. In both test environments, a preceding vehicle served as a target from which glare was evaluated.

6.2.1 Closed-Course Evaluation

The evaluation circuit was approximately 1.5 miles long with eleven (11) turns and multiple minor elevation changes. Surrounding lighting was extinguished during evaluations, and testing was initiated at least ninety minutes after sunset to ensure ambient lighting was minimized. The separation distance between the lead and test vehicles was kept as constant as possible throughout the evaluation circuit and, to the extent possible, each test vehicle was driven at a steady-state speed of 45 mph during the test.

U.S vehicles were evaluated with the automatic high beam system engaged. European specification vehicles were evaluated with the ADB system engaged. It was ensured that the vehicle test speed was high enough to allow the ADB headlamp systems on the European specification vehicles to be activated. For each test vehicle, the European version was evaluated first, followed by its U.S. specification counterpart.

Video was captured from the front of the test vehicle and the rear of the lead vehicle. Video was post-processed to enable direct comparisons between U.S. and European specification vehicle counterparts. Specifically, video was location-synched to provide a side-by-side comparison of roadway illumination. Evaluation of glare on the lead vehicle is made by video



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review and subjective impressions from the vehicle driver.

The image in figure 30 is from two time-synched videos. The top section is the view from the lead vehicle, looking back to the vehicle under test (either a U.S. or European specification vehicle).

The bottom section is the view from the vehicle under test, looking forward to the lead vehicle. In figure 30, the ADB shadow area is visible around both the oncoming and preceding vehicle. The vehicle under test is European specification with ADB.

Figure 29: Track and road driving points of view

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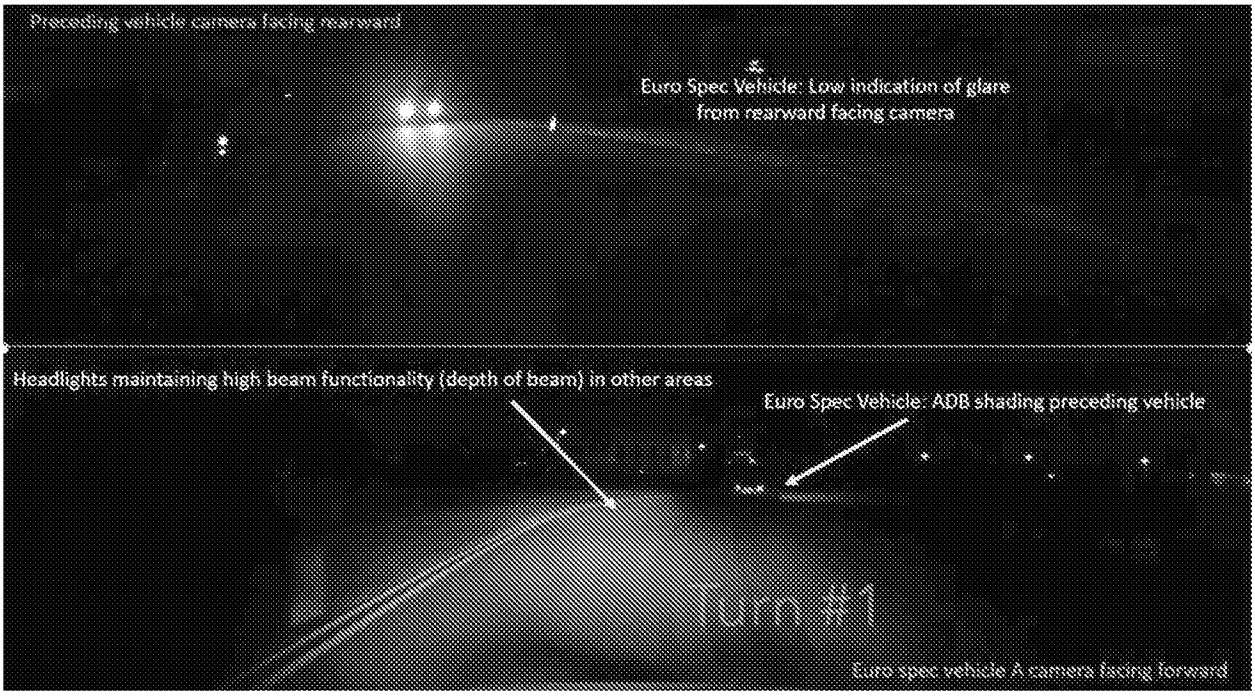


Figure 30: European specification vehicle dynamic testing on closed course

6.2.2 Public Roadway Evaluation

The public roadway evaluation[6] route was predetermined to include moderate curves, hills and straight driving sections that allowed for a steady-state speed of 35-45 mph. Additionally, no overhead lighting was present throughout the majority of the route. Testing was initiated at least ninety minutes after sunset to ensure ambient lighting was minimized. When possible, a consistent following distance of approximately 200 feet was maintained between the vehicle under test and the lead vehicle.

It is important to note that exact comparisons of lighting performance between the test vehicles on public roadways is not possible. The nature of public roadway evaluation introduces a multitude of random variables that are inherently inconsistent between vehicles. Furthermore, it would be virtually impossible to evaluate a single vehicle on the same route under identical conditions with no variations, even if the route was consecutively driven many times. However, general comparisons of roadway illumination and glare on the lead vehicle are possible. The primary purpose of public roadway

[6] European specification vehicles were properly licensed and insured by the respective manufacturers for operation on U.S. roadways. AAA personnel were documented as authorized drivers of all vehicles involved in the test.

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evaluation was to gain insight on headlamp system performance in a naturalistic environment consisting of oncoming traffic, cross traffic, background lighting from buildings, and traffic signals.

Video was captured from the front of the test vehicle and the rear of the lead vehicle. General observations relating to roadway illumination and causing glare to the driver of the lead vehicle were note. U.S. specification vehicles were evaluated with the automatic high beam system engaged. European specification vehicles were evaluated with the ADB system engaged. For each test vehicle, the U.S. version was evaluated first, followed by its European specification counterpart.



Figure 31: European specification vehicle dynamic testing on public roadway

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In figure 33, the lead vehicle is fully illuminated by the headlamps of the U.S. specification vehicle. This vehicle has auto-dimming headlamps, which have switched to low beam operation due to the closeness of the lead car. Unfortunately, the vertical inclination of the headlamps increases as the U.S. specification vehicle crests a small hill. This creates a dazzling amount of light into the passenger compartment of the lead vehicle, as shown in the top section of the photograph. Through the rearview mirror(s), this is likely to cause glare. The non-adaptive driving beam headlamps that were evaluated had no means of compensating for this type of roadway undulation. It should be noted that glare caused by this type of scenario is not unique to ADB equipped vehicles and is a common phenomenon that is exhibited by any low beam headlamp system. By shadowing oncoming or preceding vehicles, ADB equipped vehicles have the potential to avoid creating this glare.

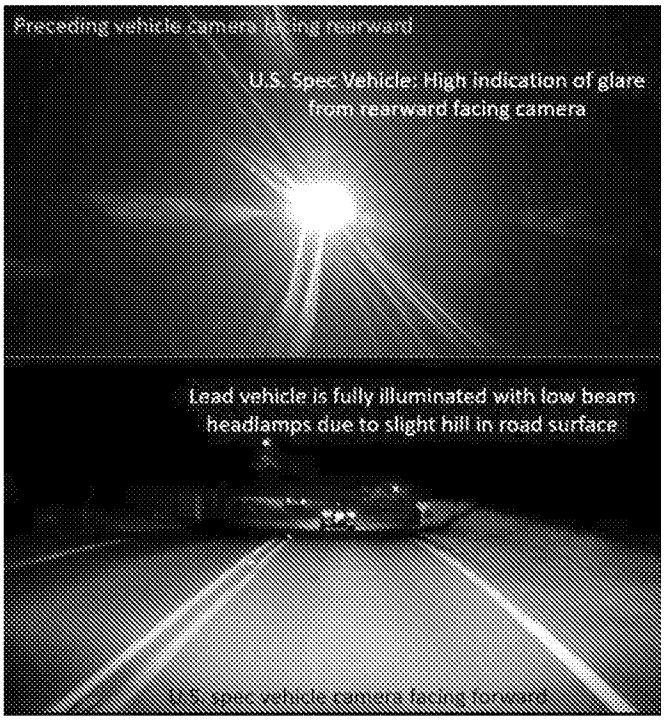


Figure 32: U.S. specification vehicle 8 auto-dimming headlamps and glare

Researchers experienced a small number of instances where the European specification vehicles appeared to be slow to make vertical corrections to the ADB shadow area on a preceding vehicle. The effect is the same as shown with the U.S. specification vehicle subjected to a road elevation change. However, this glare occurrence was less frequent with the ADB equipped vehicles than with the U.S. specification vehicles equipped with auto-dimming headlamps.

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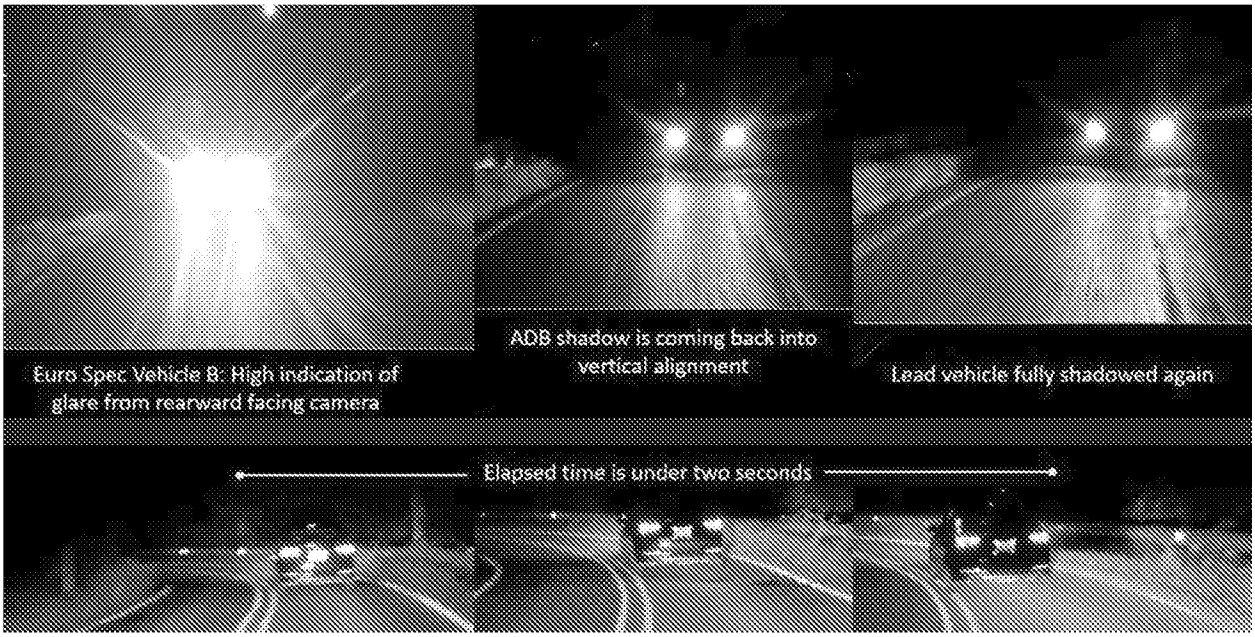


Figure 33: European specification vehicle losing vertical alignment of ADB shadow and correcting

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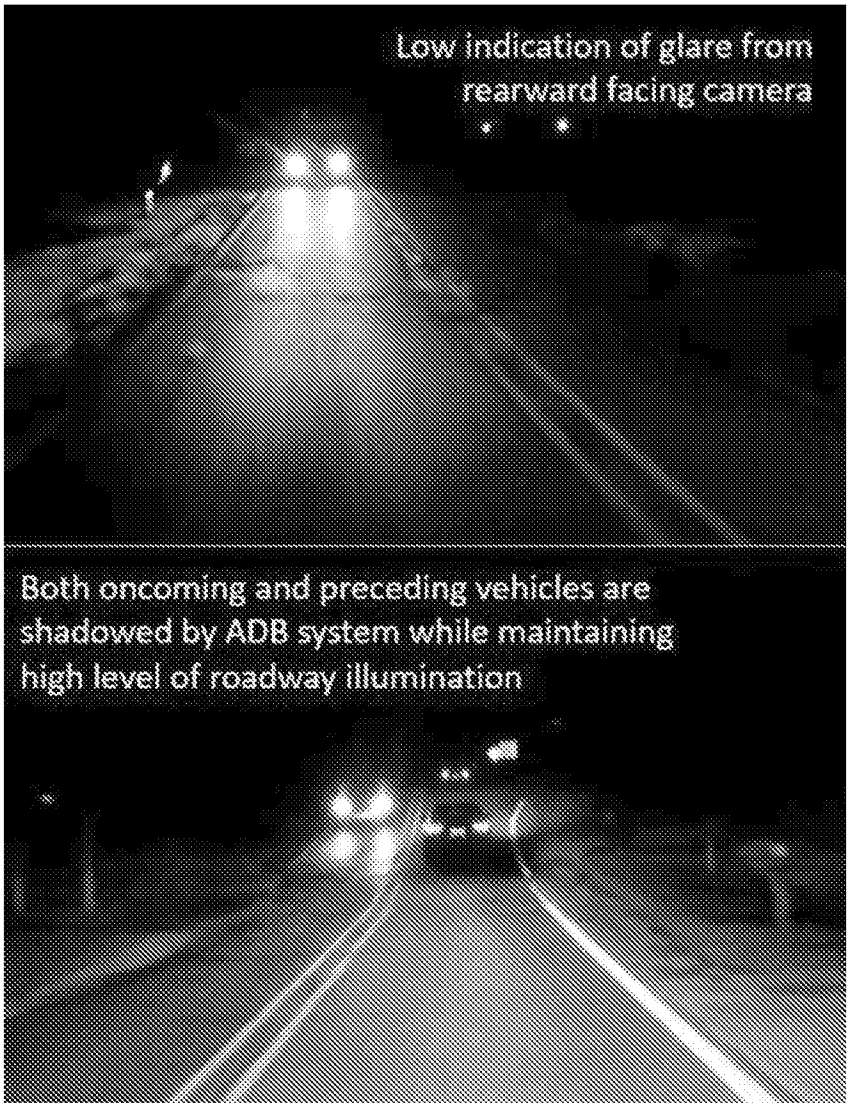


Figure 34: ADB function with oncoming traffic

In figure 35, the European specification vehicle is tracking both the preceding vehicle and the oncoming car. Both are shadowed to minimize the chance of creating glare.

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6.3 Key Findings

Researchers concurred that the European specification systems consistently provided more roadway lighting when an oncoming vehicle was approaching, or a preceding vehicle was close. This observation was supported by extensive review of video. Based on static target illumination data collected in Inquiry #1, the increase in roadway lighting could theoretically be as much as 86 percent (comparison of average European specification high beam to average U.S. specification low beam).

The rationale for comparing European high beam to U.S. low beam is that the ADB system is able to maintain high beam operation in all areas except those intentionally shaded by the system to minimize glare. In similar vehicle placement circumstances, the U.S. specification vehicles were forced to reduce headlamp operation to low beam in order to minimize the likelihood of producing glare to other vehicles.

In three nights of driving on public roads[7] with moderate traffic, researchers reported zero instances of oncoming traffic "flashing" to indicate being glared by any of the test vehicles. Both the automatic high beams (U.S. specification) and ADB (European specification) were effective in mitigating glare in real world traffic conditions.

7 The Cost of Inadequate Lighting

The overall business case for the implementation of ADB headlamp systems involves balancing the cost of the technology with its potential positive impact on safety and any associated savings. In 2010, NHTSA conducted extensive research regarding the implied economic and societal costs of vehicle collisions within the United States. There are extensive indirect costs outside of vehicle damage that must be considered to understand the full impact of an accident. NHTSA research identified these factors, and their contribution to overall economic impact as seen in figure 35 below.

[7]Secondary roadways and interstate highway without overhead lighting

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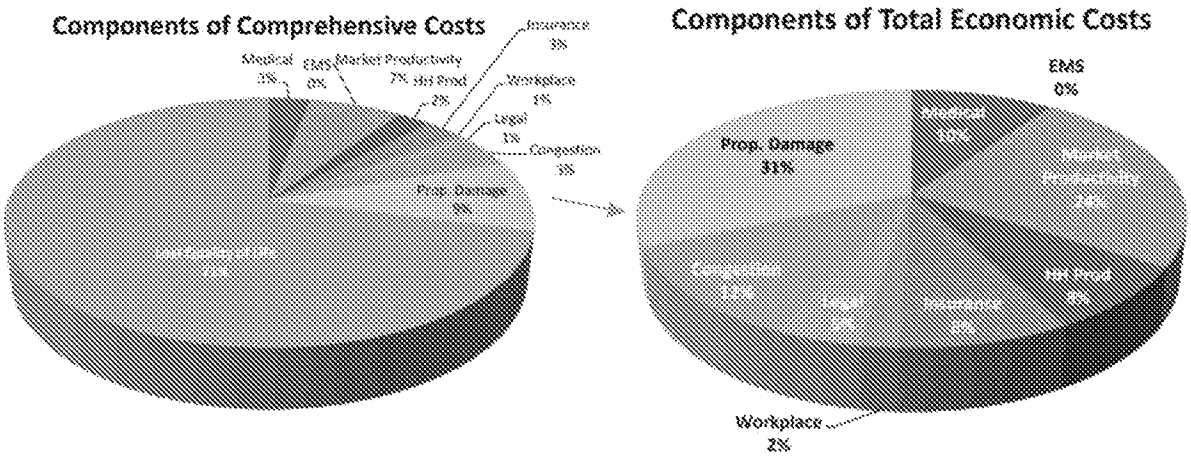


Figure 33: Components of Total Economic Costs for Vehicular Incidents (NHTSA, 2010)

For the purpose of this research, the findings of AAA's headlamp study are assumed relevant to the average vehicular crash. The results for scenarios detailed in the NHTSA research are used for average estimates of per-crash costs.

The estimate of cost savings as a result of adopting ADB headlamps in the United States depends on the number of crashes the technology will help prevent compared to traditional headlamps. Researchers associated with Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, in conjunction with the Transportation Lighting Alliance, published findings in 2014 concluding that the application of ADB systems could reduce visibility-related nighttime crashes by six to seven percent compared to the visibility provided by low beam headlamp systems (Bullough, 2016). For this study, a visibility-related crash was assumed to be any nighttime incident involving pedestrians, cyclists, or wildlife in which no alcohol was found present in either the driver or victim. The justification for using low beam headlamps as the baseline for visibility improvements is related to additional findings in which it was concluded that vehicle operators do not use their high beams in most driving conditions, whether due to oncoming traffic, preceding traffic or negligence. The following sections describe the quantity and cost of incidents involving pedestrians, cyclists and wildlife.

7.1 Pedestrians

Using NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) Encyclopedia, it was determined that in 2015 there were 2,753 instances in which pedestrians were fatally struck by vehicles and neither the driver nor the pedestrian had alcohol present in their systems. Seventy-four percent of those instances

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occurred during dark or low-light conditions that would require headlamp use. In addition, approximately 31,000 pedestrian injuries occurred in similar conditions.

Even after eliminating crashes in which alcohol was detected in the driver or pedestrian, there remained 25,000 instances of pedestrian death or injury as a result of being struck by a motor vehicle in dark lighting conditions. Applying the average economic and societal harm cost rates from the 2010 NHTSA study results in approximately $13.25 billion in damages annually. If there were a six percent reduction in such crashes from universal adoption of ADB headlamp systems, nearly 1500 pedestrian deaths and injuries could be prevented, and the cost savings would be in excess of $861 million annually.

7.2 Cyclists

A roughly equal number of vehicle collisions with cyclists occurred in light and dark driving conditions. This may mean that nighttime bicycling is less frequent than walking, or that bicyclists are typically more visible in dark conditions. There were a total of 511 fatalities and 28,350 injuries in collisions where a cyclist was struck by a vehicle and there was no alcohol present in either party. Of those events, 14,430 occurred in dark conditions.

Applying the average economic and societal harm cost rates from the 2010 NHTSA study results in approximately $7.66 billion in damages annually. If there were a six percent reduction in such crashes from universal adoption of ADB headlamp systems, roughly 850 cyclist deaths and injuries could be prevented, and the cost savings would be in excess of $498 million annually.

7.3 Wildlife Impact

A 2008 report on wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs) by the Federal Highway Administration Research and Technology group found that an estimated 292,000 WVC occur annually. The crashes most frequently occur in the early morning (5:00 – 9:00 am) and evening (4:00 pm –12:00 am), times when wildlife is often feeding and more active. These times also correspond with periods when headlamp use would be necessary for visibility due to low natural light levels.

Based on available data, the financial implications for public agencies, medical, property, and potential loss of life result in an estimated annual cost of WVCs in the area of $8.39 billion. If there were a six percent reduction in WVCs from universal adoption of ADB headlamp systems, nearly 18,000 collisions could be avoided for a potential cost savings of $503 million annually.

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It is noted in the research that approximately 95 percent of WVCs do not involve vehicle occupant injury. However, the rate of collisions has been steadily increasing, largely due to wildlife population growth and reduced habitat.

8 Summary of Findings

Inquiry #1: How do U.S. and European specification low beam headlamps differ in static roadway illumination?

- Average target illumination values for high beam was 12.5% higher for European specification vehicles compared to U.S. specification.
- U.S. specification vehicles produced 1.9% more low beam illumination on targets.
- Driver perception of target illumination during static testing was similar among all vehicles tested, European and U.S. specification.
- All test vehicles (U.S. and European specification) were equipped with premium LED headlamps and performed in the expected range of that headlamp system.

Inquiry #2: How do U.S. and European specification headlamps differ in producing glare?

- All four test vehicles scored in the low perceived glare range of the evaluation scale, ranging from "Satisfactory" to "Just Acceptable". One manufacturer's European specification vehicle scored better than its U.S. specification counterpart did. Results for the other manufacturer's vehicles were reversed.

Inquiry #3: How do U.S. and European specification Headlamps Differ in dynamic roadway illumination?

- The European specification systems consistently provided more roadway lighting when an oncoming vehicle was approaching, or a preceding vehicle was close.
    - Based on static target illumination data, the increase in roadway lighting could be as much as 86 percent (comparison of average European specification high beam to U.S. specification low beam).
    - The adaptive driving beam (ADB) system maintained high beam operation in all areas except those intentionally shaded by the system to minimize glare.
    - In similar vehicle placement circumstances, the U.S. specification vehicles were forced to reduce headlamp operation to low beam in order to minimize the likelihood of producing glare to other vehicles.

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- Roadways with hills were the most common driving scenario where other drivers were subjected to potential glare by an ADB capable vehicle. It should be noted that all headlamp systems currently available (manual high-low switching and automatic high-beam) produce glare to other drivers when cresting hills. In this situation, where glare potential is high, AAA research noted that it occurred less frequently with ADB capable European specification headlamp systems than with auto-dimming U.S. specification systems.

8.1 Forward Looking Statement

There is an obvious development path for ADB headlamp system software and hardware. Refinements have been swift over the last several model years while ADB headlamp systems have been available in Europe and other markets. Auto-dimming systems (and manual high-low beam switching) are inherently limited. These systems must switch to low beam in the presence of traffic, resulting in a sharp reduction in roadway lighting. All headlamp systems which are limited to either high or low beam operation cannot avoid causing glare to other vehicles when driving on undulating roadways and cresting hills.

ADB headlamp systems, with selective activation or shading of specific elements of the headlight beam, hold the promise to successfully address this major shortcoming of all current headlamp systems. In order to improve vertical tracking of the adaptive driving beam shadow region, refinements in vehicle tracking with the camera(s), image processing speed, and the speed of updating the shaded region location are required. In the future, high definition matrix systems should be able to compensate for this as their reaction performance and significantly increased resolution will offer greater opportunities for optimization.

9 Summary Recommendations

- Support NHTSA's proposed rulemaking to allow ADB headlamp systems in the United States
- Advocate for performance based testing for ALL headlamp systems as part of type certification for automobiles in an effort to increase the efficiency of forward lighting for all vehicles on the roadway
- Advocate for increasing the high beam output threshold to match European standards (over two times the U.S. limit) for vehicles with ADB systems that meet or exceed a prescribed performance threshold.

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Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:	
Filing Date:	
Title of Invention:	Detector Controlled Illuminating System
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Yechezkal Spero
Filer:	Sangeeta G Shah/Fiona Archer
Attorney Docket Number:	TRCH0102RX

Filed as Large Entity

Filing Fees for ex parte reexam

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD($)
Basic Filing:				
EX PARTE REEXAMINATION (1.510(A)) NON-STREAMLINED	1812	1	12600	12600
Pages:				
Claims:				
REEXAMINATION INDEPENDENT CLAIMS	1821	8	480	3840
REEXAMINATION CLAIMS IN EXCESS OF 20	1822	63	100	6300
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				
Patent Appeals and Interference:				

SPERO EX. 2014

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD($)
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:				
Extension-of-Time:				
Miscellaneous:				
			Total in USD ($)	**22740**

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	43394462
Application Number:	90014815
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	6654
Title of Invention:	Detector Controlled Illuminating System
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Yechezkal Spero
Customer Number:	22045
Filer:	Sangeeta G Shah/Fiona Archer
Filer Authorized By:	Sangeeta G Shah
Attorney Docket Number:	TRCH0102RX
Receipt Date:	30-JUL-2021
Filing Date:	
Time Stamp:	17:49:40
Application Type:	Reexam (Patent Owner)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	DA
Payment was successfully received in RAM	$22740
RAM confirmation Number	E20217TH50572599
Deposit Account	
Authorized User	

The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows:

File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Copy of patent for which reexamination is requested	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_PAT_A_Spero_US9955551B2.pdf	9251019 fda416ab9419b7f2fb542ec22d3be95d03a6529b	no	76
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2	Foreign Reference	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_PA_A_Stam_PCT.PDF	9162976 ae273c536005efaeee4cf13bbd322c2be784d168	no	160
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3	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_PA_B_US6406172.pdf	847841 91bf11425ab863b9e0245704a568b694bde7c19c	no	12
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4	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_PA_C_US6281632.pdf	2489778 d85e231cb7a26e650ac3547ec0cfd164e4427502	no	38
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5	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_PA_D_US6587573.pdf	6573272 732efef4660b27c123a9ecb1160ea49e815418a5	no	83
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7	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_OTH_A_Stam_Declaration_CV.pdf	16549543 f98b07cc3b74c706daf25df98a321eef10d01ae1	no	64
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13	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_OTH_H_6752523.pdf	884201 b82384cbf27be1337d8b0d251adf5b723f1e2126	no	14
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14	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Form (SB08)	TRCH0102RX_SB08_IDS.pdf	71801 f2d71a1e5003517b47f1b00991d068a82aa36cf1	no	4
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17	Power of Attorney	TRCH0102RX_POA_Spero_signed.pdf	1042047 24916a469c5f888fddeaed0a05f4997ff3dfba9d	no	2
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23	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_6_HELLA_Company_History.pdf	587292 6acb114a4caf21db2fadee1390415c35a1edbcd4	no	2
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25	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_9_Driving_Vision_News.pdf	719156 1d5ca52c6bc9f1eb03798e18db2119dd21ac6a24	no	5
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27	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_11_Alliance_for_Automotive_Innovation.pdf	2352309 e4087584dd9744fb9cc68cda62308904b67e996a	no	33
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Information:					

28	Other Reference-Patent/App/Search documents	TRCH0102RX_Exhibit_8_AAA_Report.pdf	18496383 238c8732d5155d44a7cb10b62207197c33d987fe	no	59
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Information:					
29	Fee Worksheet (SB06)	fee-info.pdf	44188 2bfdf49805bf83607d473f6836925e7c08440d6e	no	2
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Information:					
			Total Files Size (in bytes):	93591674	

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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.

Exhibit PAT-A
U.S. Patent No. 9,955,551 B2
Spero

US009955551B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Spero

(10) **Patent No.: US 9,955,551 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent: Apr. 24, 2018**

(54) **DETECTOR CONTROLLED ILLUMINATING SYSTEM**

(75) Inventor: **Yechezkal Evan Spero**, Moshav Tifrach (IL)

(73) Assignee: **Yechezkal Evan Spero**, Tifrach (IL)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 911 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/357,549**

(22) Filed: **Jan. 24, 2012**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2012/0206050 A1 Aug. 16, 2012

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 10/604,360, filed on Jul. 14, 2003, now Pat. No. 8,100,552.
(Continued)

(51) **Int. Cl.**
H05B 37/02 (2006.01)
B60Q 1/04 (2006.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***H05B 37/0227*** (2013.01); ***B60Q 1/04*** (2013.01); ***B60Q 1/085*** (2013.01); ***B60Q 1/1423*** (2013.01); ***F21K 9/23*** (2016.08); ***F21K 9/232*** (2016.08); ***F21S 4/28*** (2016.01); ***F21S 48/1154*** (2013.01); ***F21S 48/1159*** (2013.01); ***F21S 48/1736*** (2013.01); ***F21V 19/02*** (2013.01); ***F21V 23/0464*** (2013.01); ***F21V 23/0471*** (2013.01); ***F21V 23/0478*** (2013.01); ***H05B 3/008*** (2013.01); ***H05B 33/0812*** (2013.01); ***H05B 33/0857*** (2013.01); ***H05B 33/0863*** (2013.01); ***H05B 37/02*** (2013.01); ***H05B 37/0218*** (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/054* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/112* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/116* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/122* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/134* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/142* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/21* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/23* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/312* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/314* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/322* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/41* (2013.01); *B60Q 2300/42* (2013.01); *F21S 48/10* (2013.01); *F21V 21/02* (2013.01); *F21V 21/30* (2013.01); *F21V 29/74* (2015.01);
(Continued)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H05B 33/08; H05B 37/02; B60Q 1/04
USPC 315/152, 77, 307, 312; 362/276, 234
See application file for complete search history.

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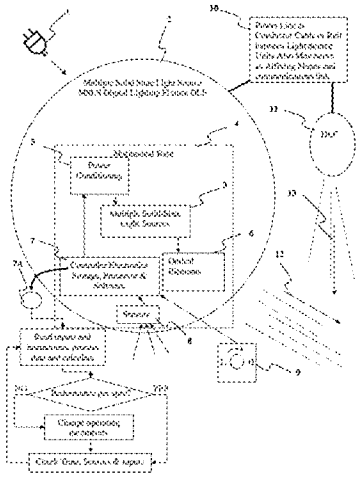
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Primary Examiner — Tung X Le

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An illuminating device coupled with sensors or an image acquisition device and a logical controller allows illumination intensity and spectrum to be varied according to changing user needs. The system provides illumination to areas according to the principles of correct lighting practice for the optimal performance of visual tasks in the most efficient, cost effective manner. Aspects of the invention include: lighting fixtures which adapt to ambient lighting, movement, visual tasks being performed, and environmental and personal conditions affecting illumination requirements at any given instant. Lighting fixtures having spatial distribution of spectrum and intensity, providing both "background" room lighting, and "task" lighting.

23 Claims, 24 Drawing Sheets



Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 61/535,981, filed on Sep. 17, 2011, provisional application No. 60/395,308, filed on Jul. 12, 2002.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

B60Q 1/08	(2006.01)
B60Q 1/14	(2006.01)
F21V 19/02	(2006.01)
F21V 23/04	(2006.01)
H05B 33/08	(2006.01)
H05B 3/00	(2006.01)
F21S 4/28	(2016.01)
F21K 9/23	(2016.01)
F21K 9/232	(2016.01)
F21S 8/10	(2006.01)
F21V 21/02	(2006.01)
F21V 21/30	(2006.01)
F21W 101/10	(2006.01)
F21W 111/023	(2006.01)
F21W 111/027	(2006.01)
F21W 111/08	(2006.01)
F21W 131/103	(2006.01)
F21W 131/40	(2006.01)
F21Y 113/00	(2016.01)
F21V 29/74	(2015.01)
F21Y 115/10	(2016.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC *F21W 2101/10* (2013.01); *F21W 2111/023* (2013.01); *F21W 2111/027* (2013.01); *F21W 2111/08* (2013.01); *F21W 2131/103* (2013.01); *F21W 2131/40* (2013.01); *F21Y 2113/00* (2013.01); *F21Y 2115/10* (2016.08); *Y02B 20/343* (2013.01); *Y02B 20/383* (2013.01); *Y02B 20/46* (2013.01)

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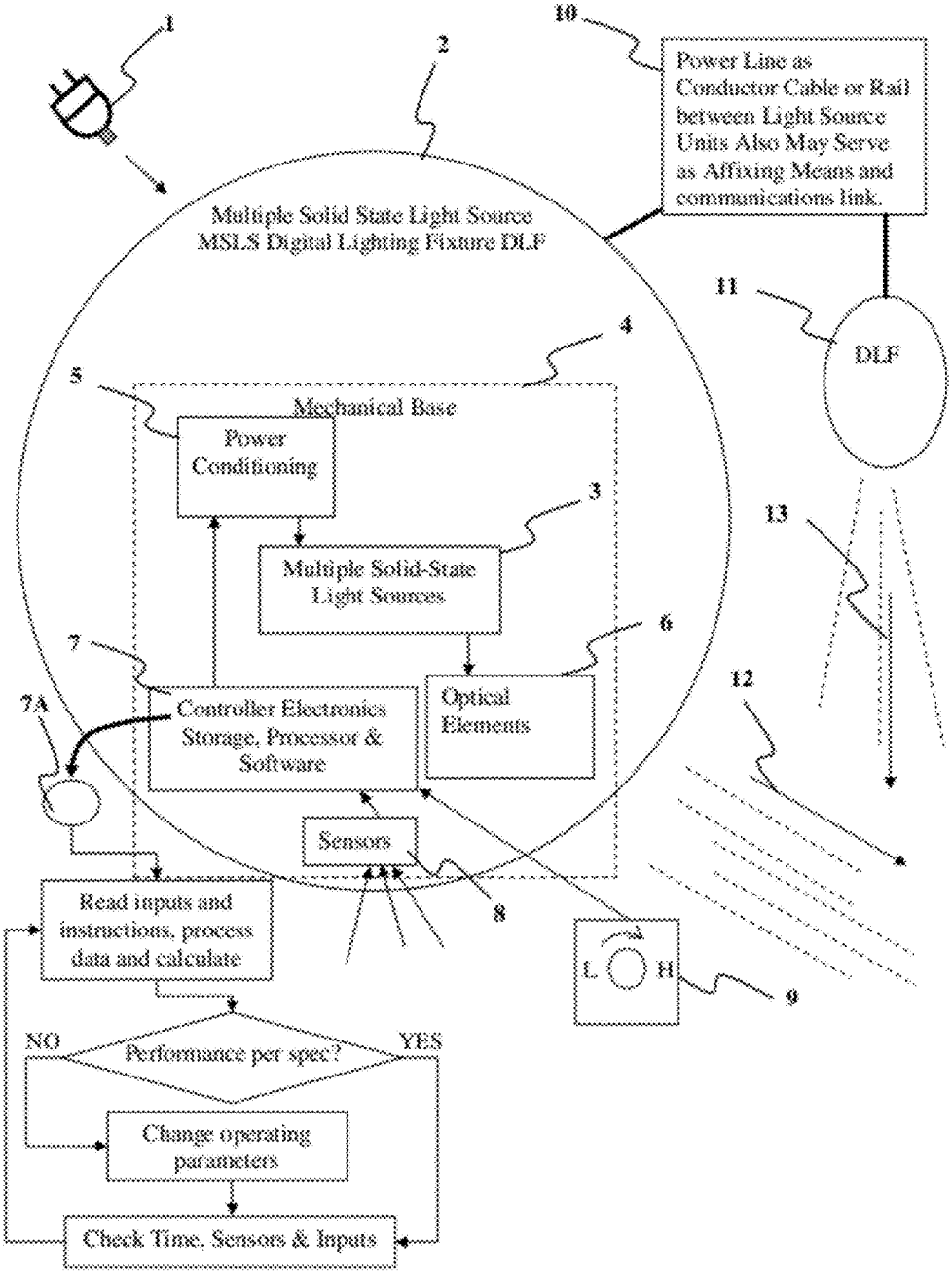

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Power Line as Conductor Cable or Rail between Light Source Units Also May Serve as Affixing Means and communications link.
Multiple Solid State Light Source MSLS Digital Lighting Fixture DLF
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DLF
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Mechanical Base
Power Conditioning
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Multiple Solid-State Light Sources
13
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7A
Controller Electronics Storage, Processor & Software
Optical Elements
12
Sensors
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Read inputs and instructions, process data and calculate
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NO
Performance per spec?
YES
Change operating parameters
Check Time, Sensors & Inputs

FIG. 1

PRIOR ART

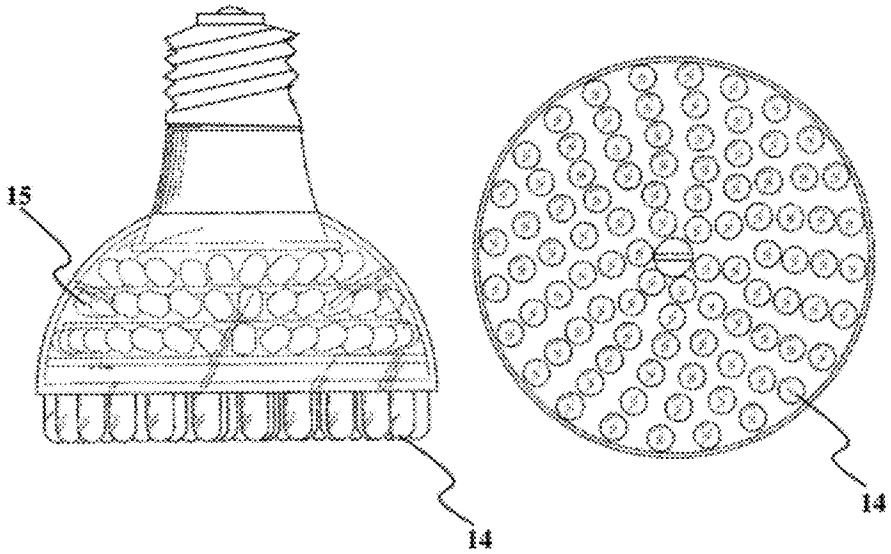


FIG. 2A

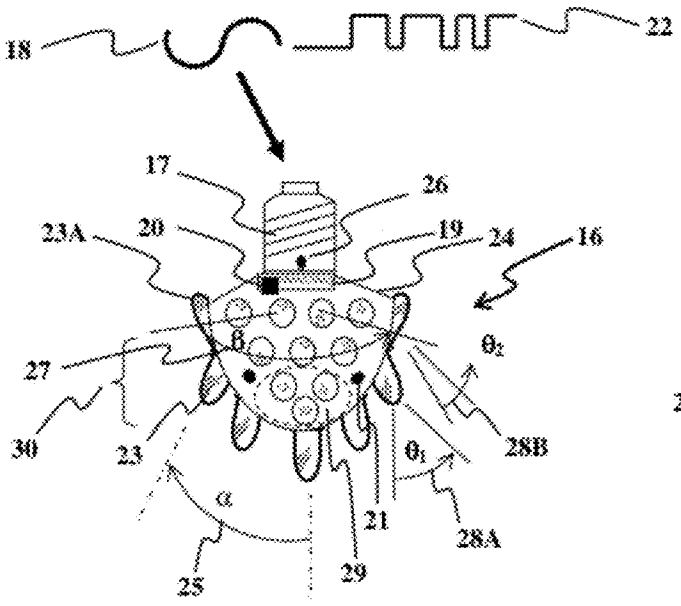


FIG. 2B

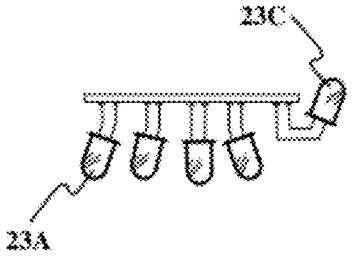


FIG. 2C

PRIOR ART

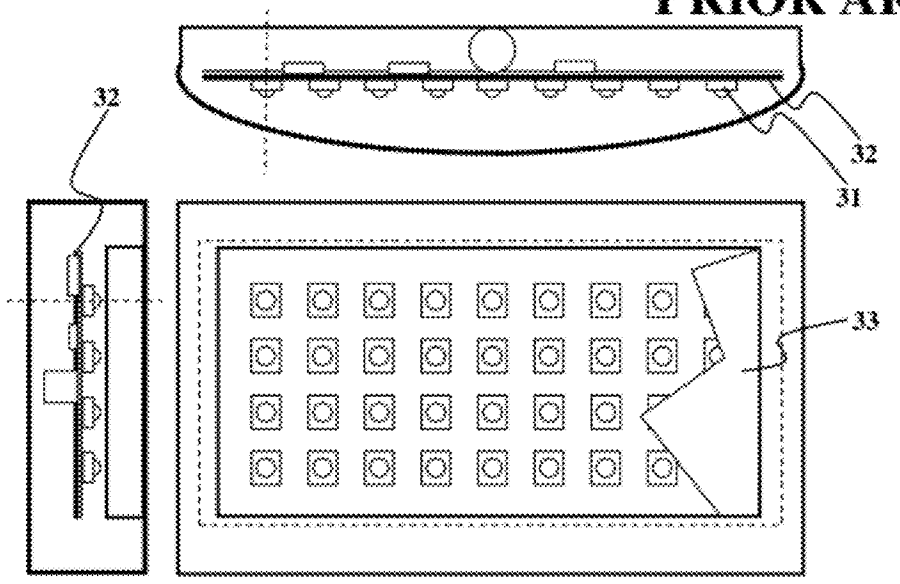


FIG. 3A

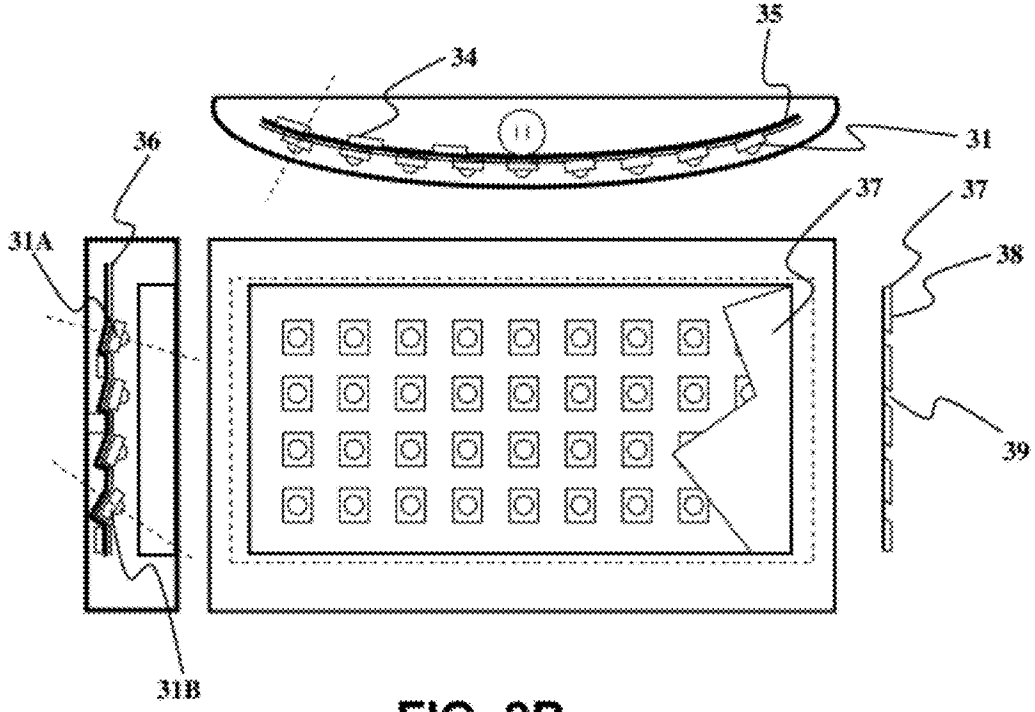


FIG. 3B

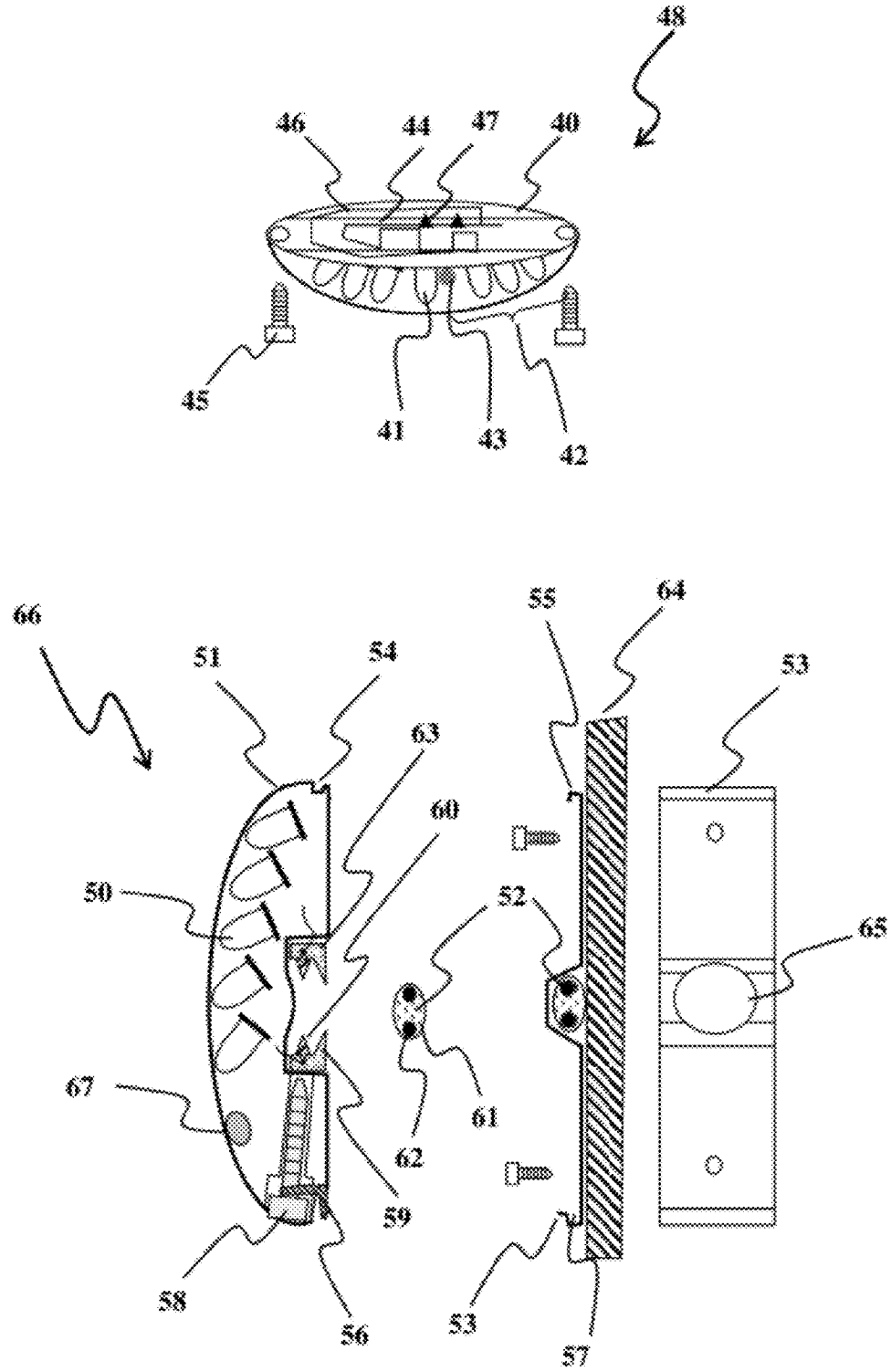

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FIG. 4

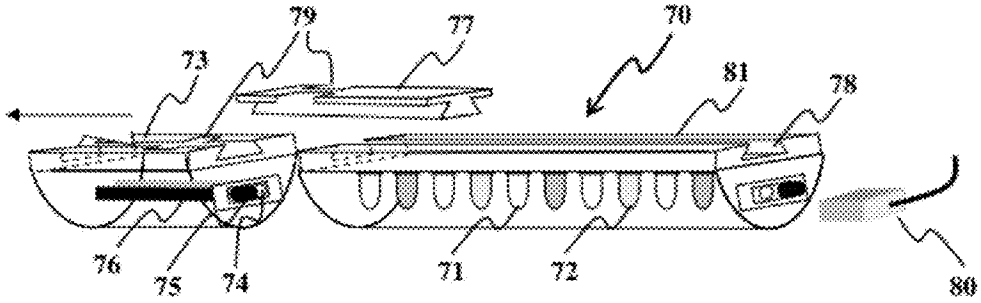

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FIG. 5

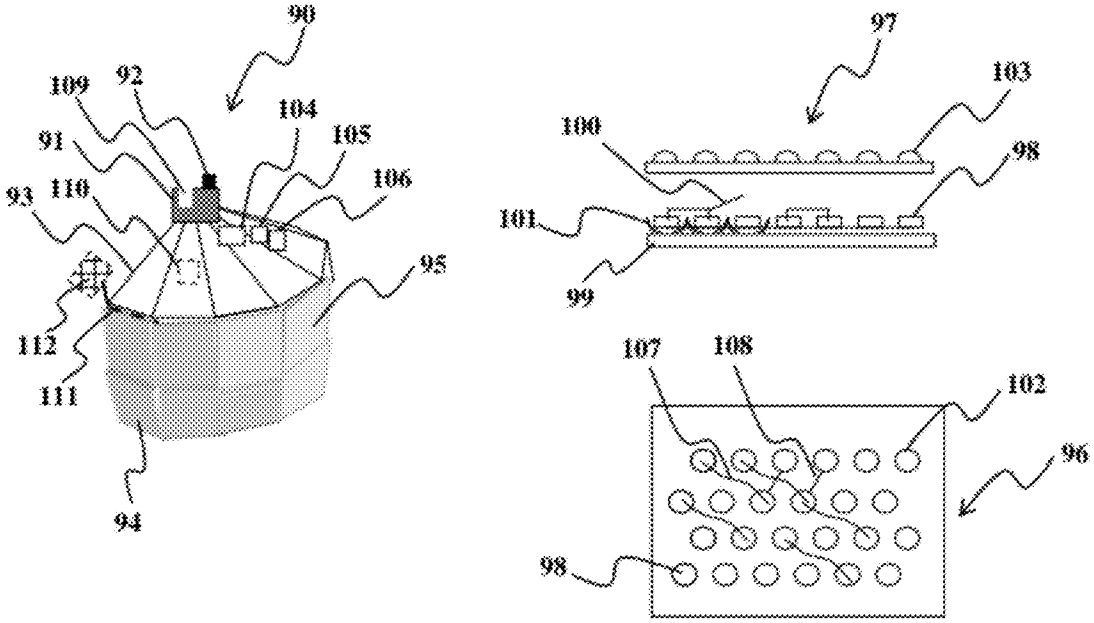

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FIG. 6

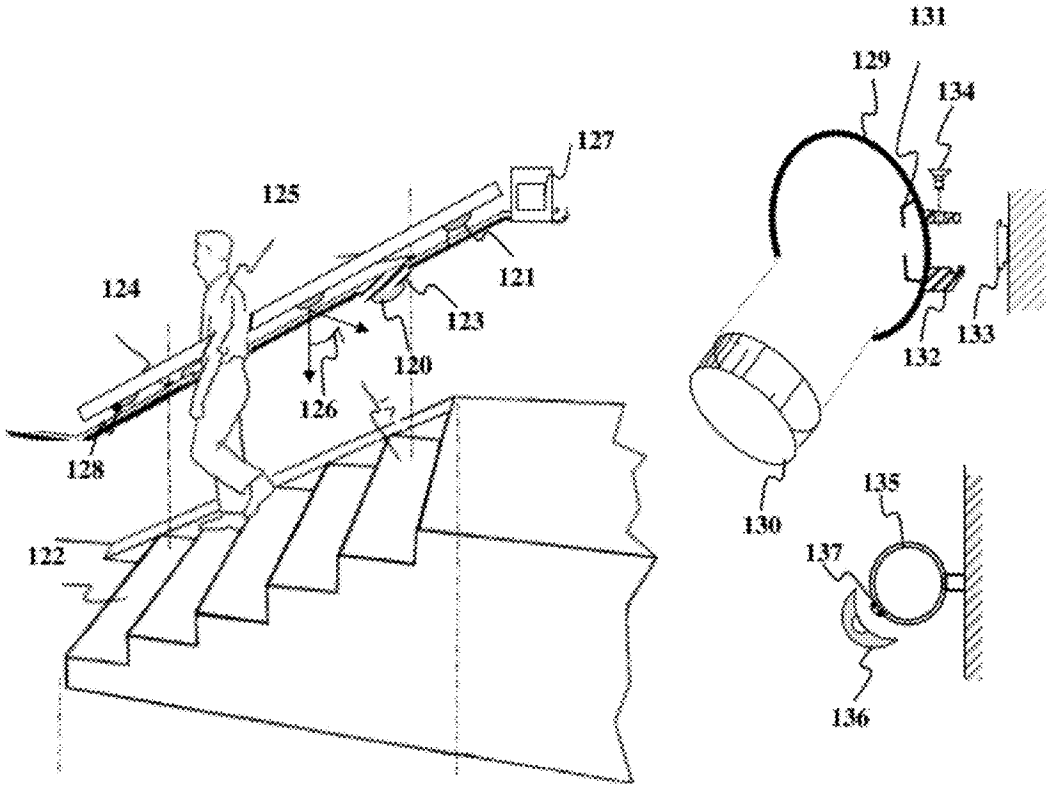

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FIG. 7

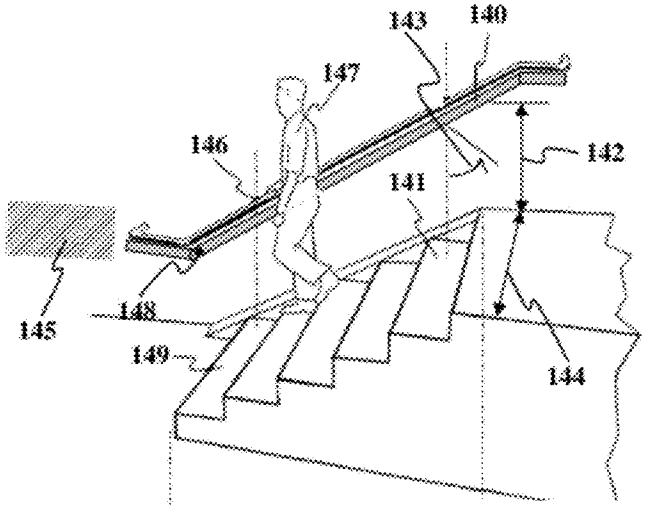

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FIG. 8

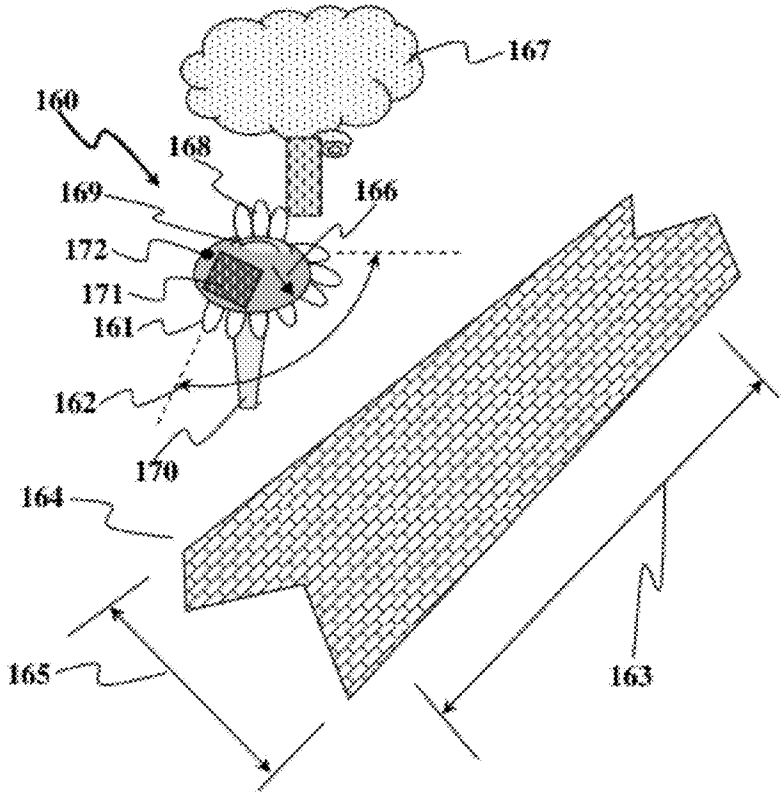

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FIG. 9

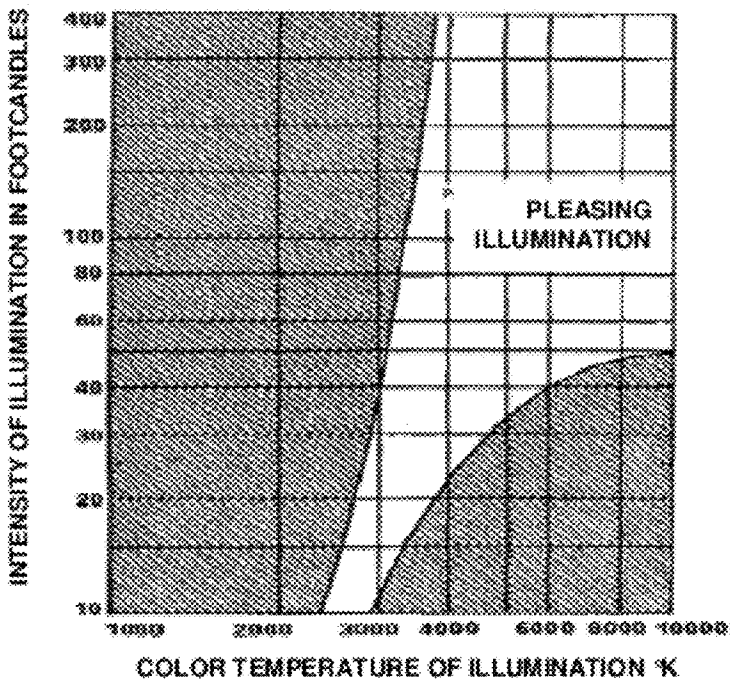

INTENSITY OF ILLUMINATION IN FOOTCANDLES
PLEASING ILLUMINATION
COLOR TEMPERATURE OF ILLUMINATION °K

FIG. 10

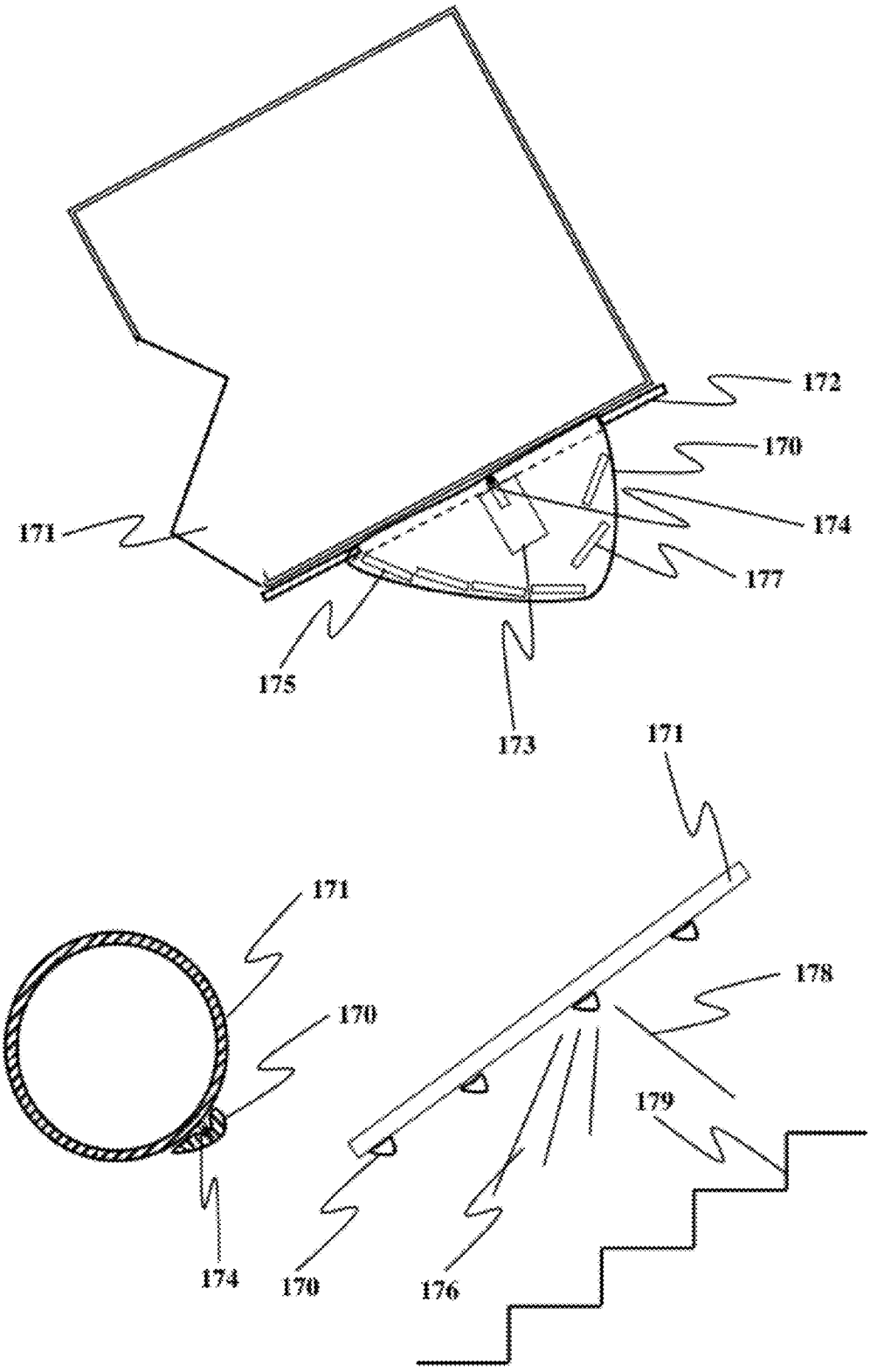


FIG. 11

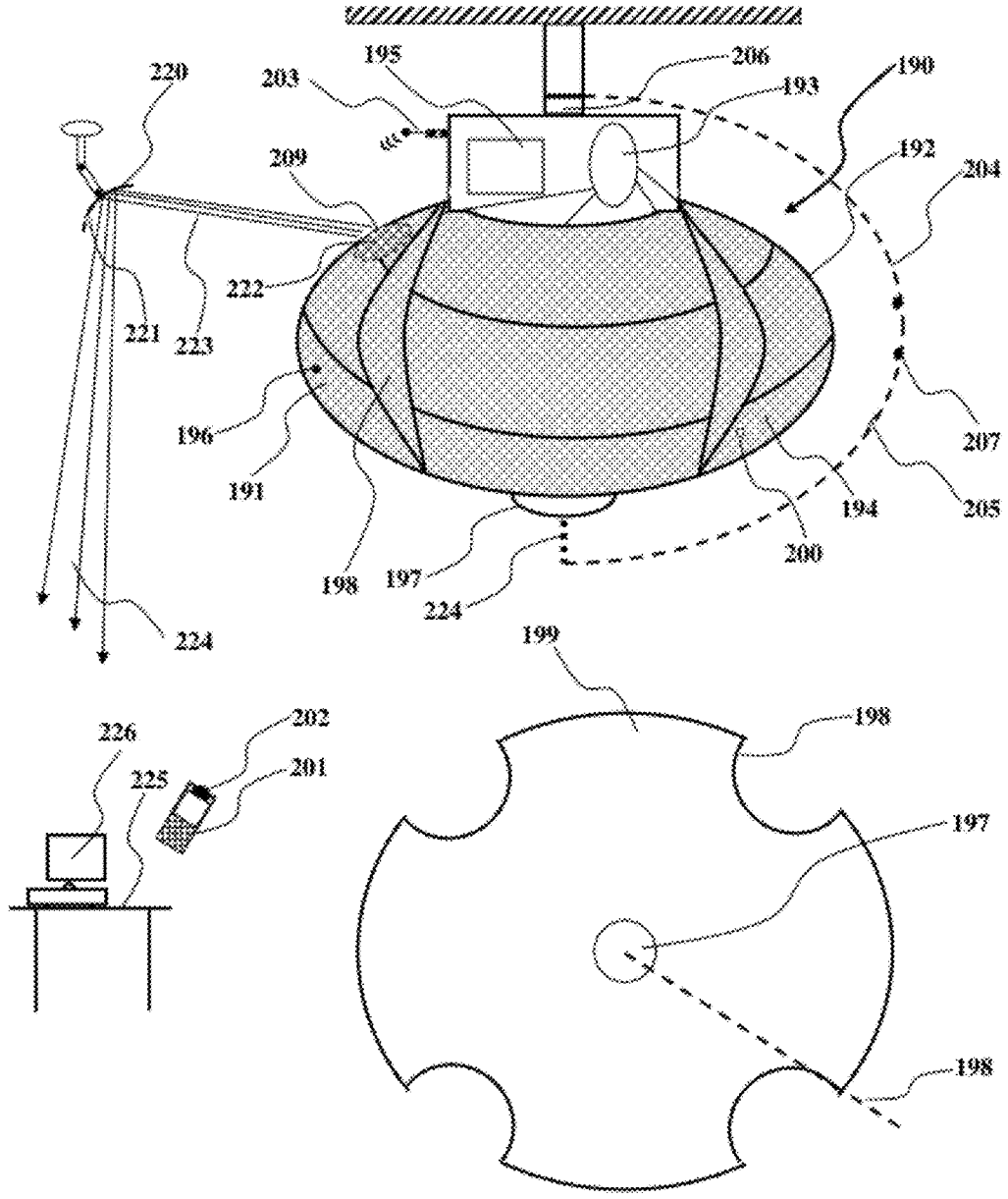

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FIG. 12

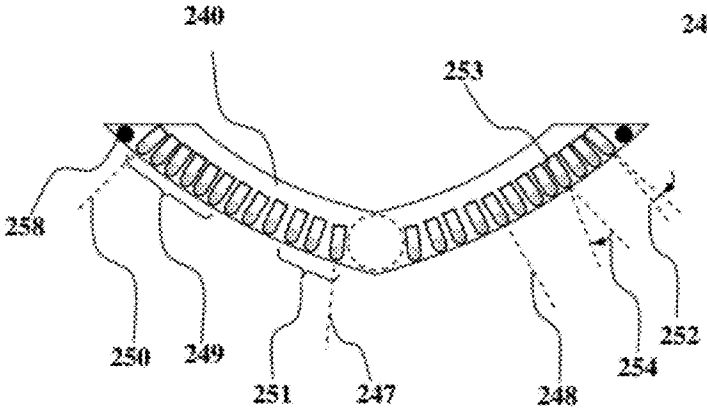


FIG. 13A

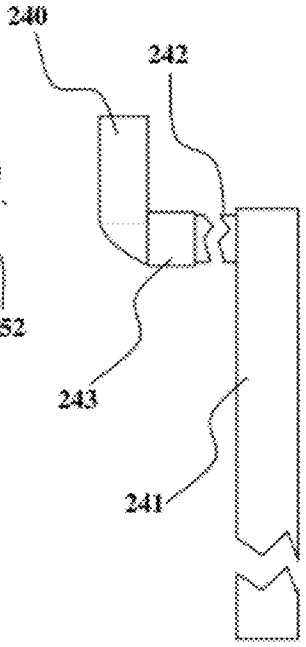


FIG. 13B

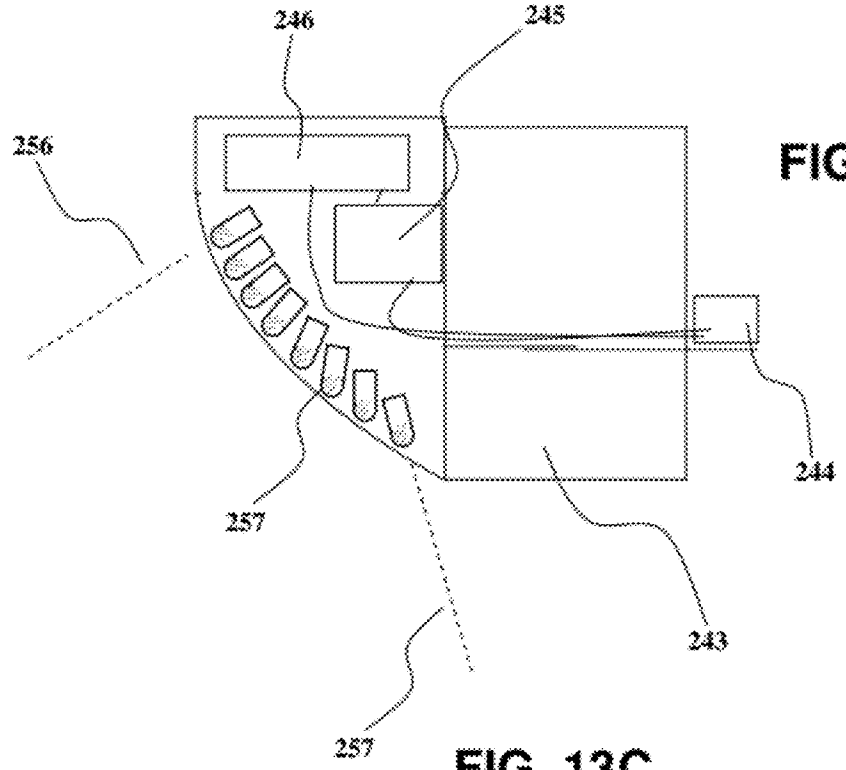


FIG. 13C

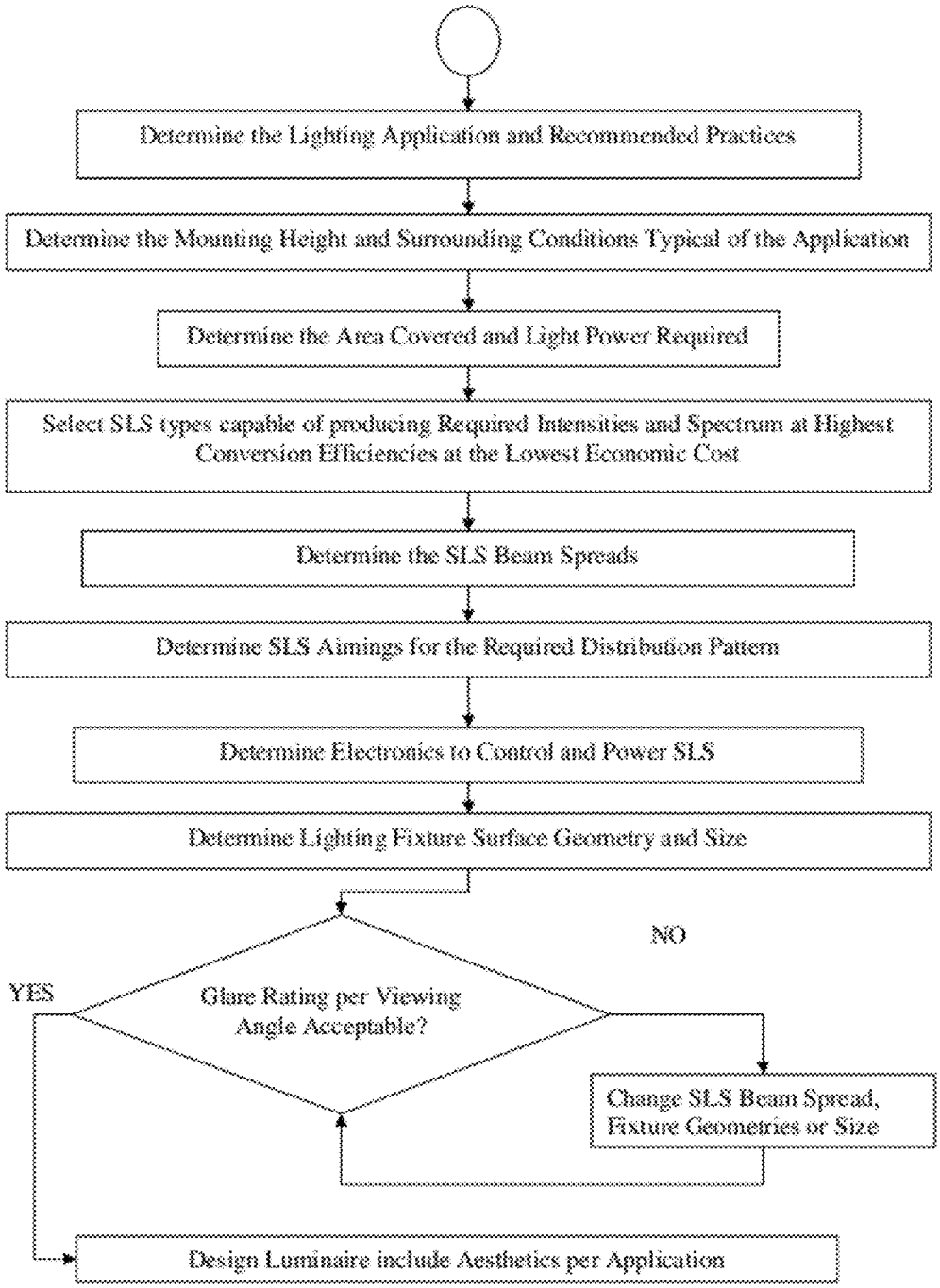

Determine the Lighting Application and Recommended Practices
Determine the Mounting Height and Surrounding Conditions Typical of the Application
Determine the Area Covered and Light Power Required
Select SLS types capable of producing Required Intensities and Spectrum at Highest Conversion Efficiencies at the Lowest Economic Cost
Determine the SLS Beam Spreads
Determine SLS Aimings for the Required Distribution Pattern
Determine Electronics to Control and Power SLS
Determine Lighting Fixture Surface Geometry and Size
Glare Rating per Viewing Angle Acceptable?
NO
YES
Change SLS Beam Spread, Fixture Geometries or Size
Design Luminaire include Aesthetics per Application

FIG. 14

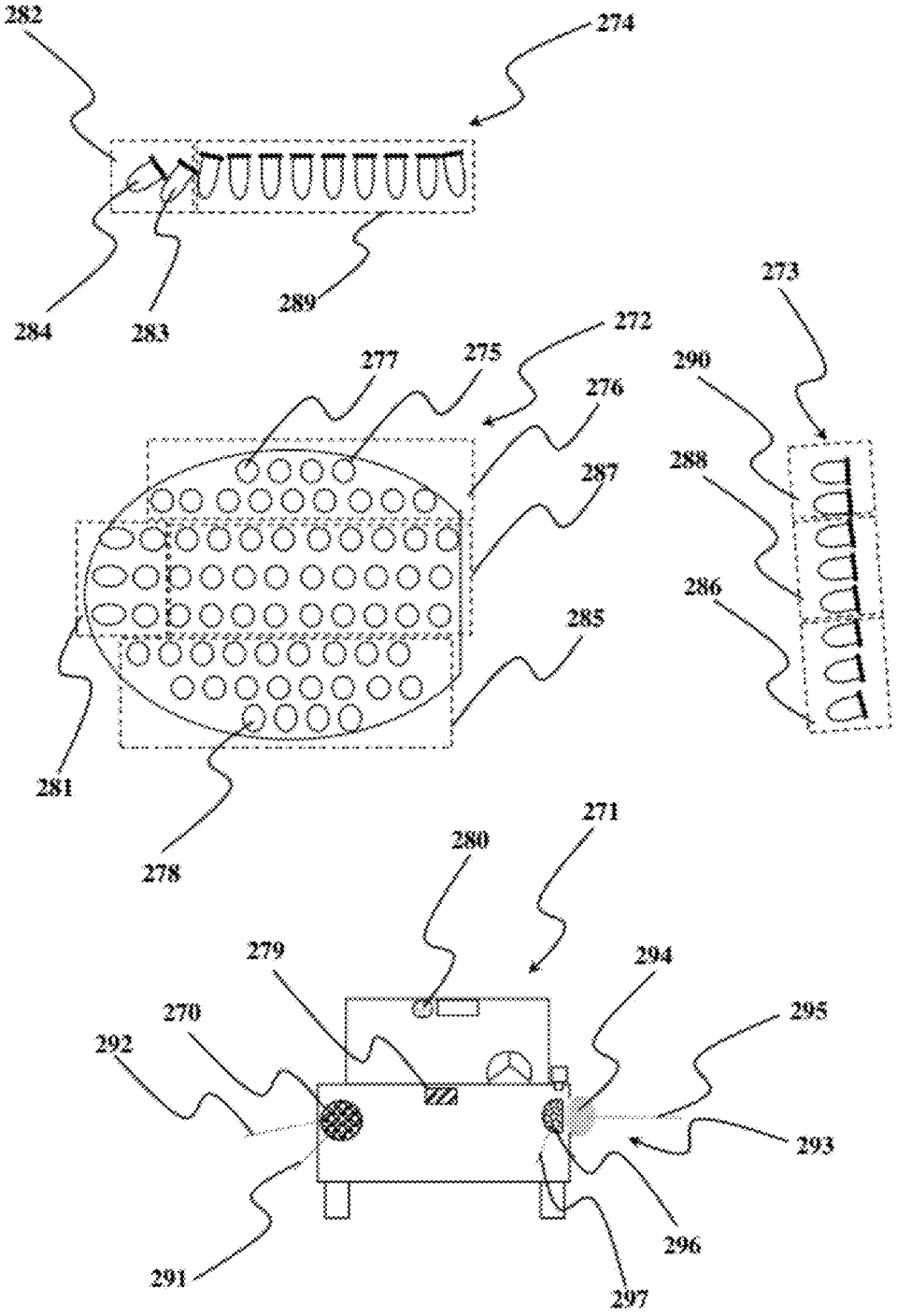
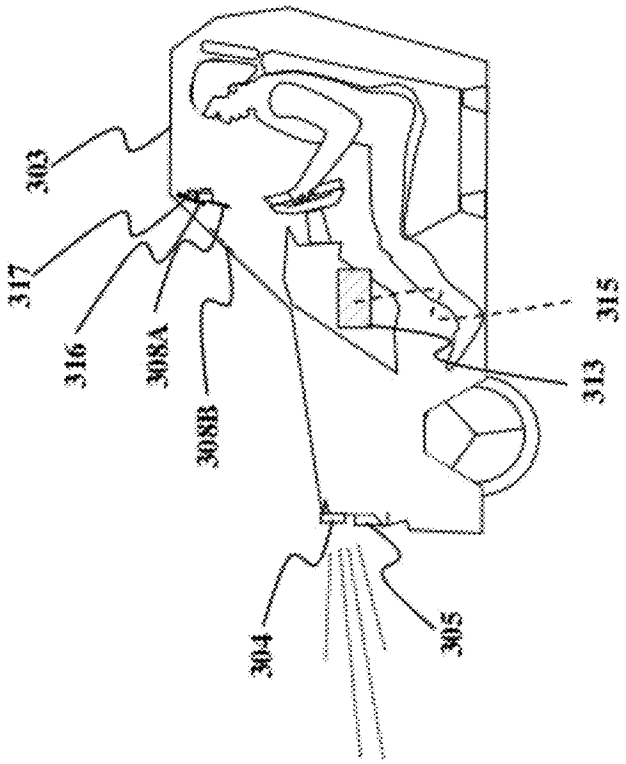

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FIG. 15


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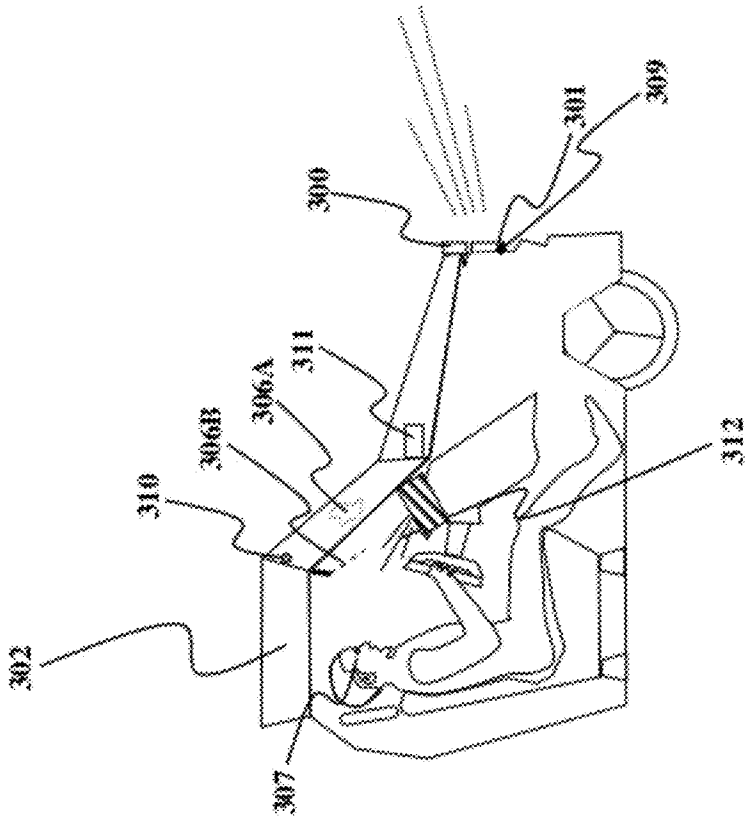

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FIG. 16

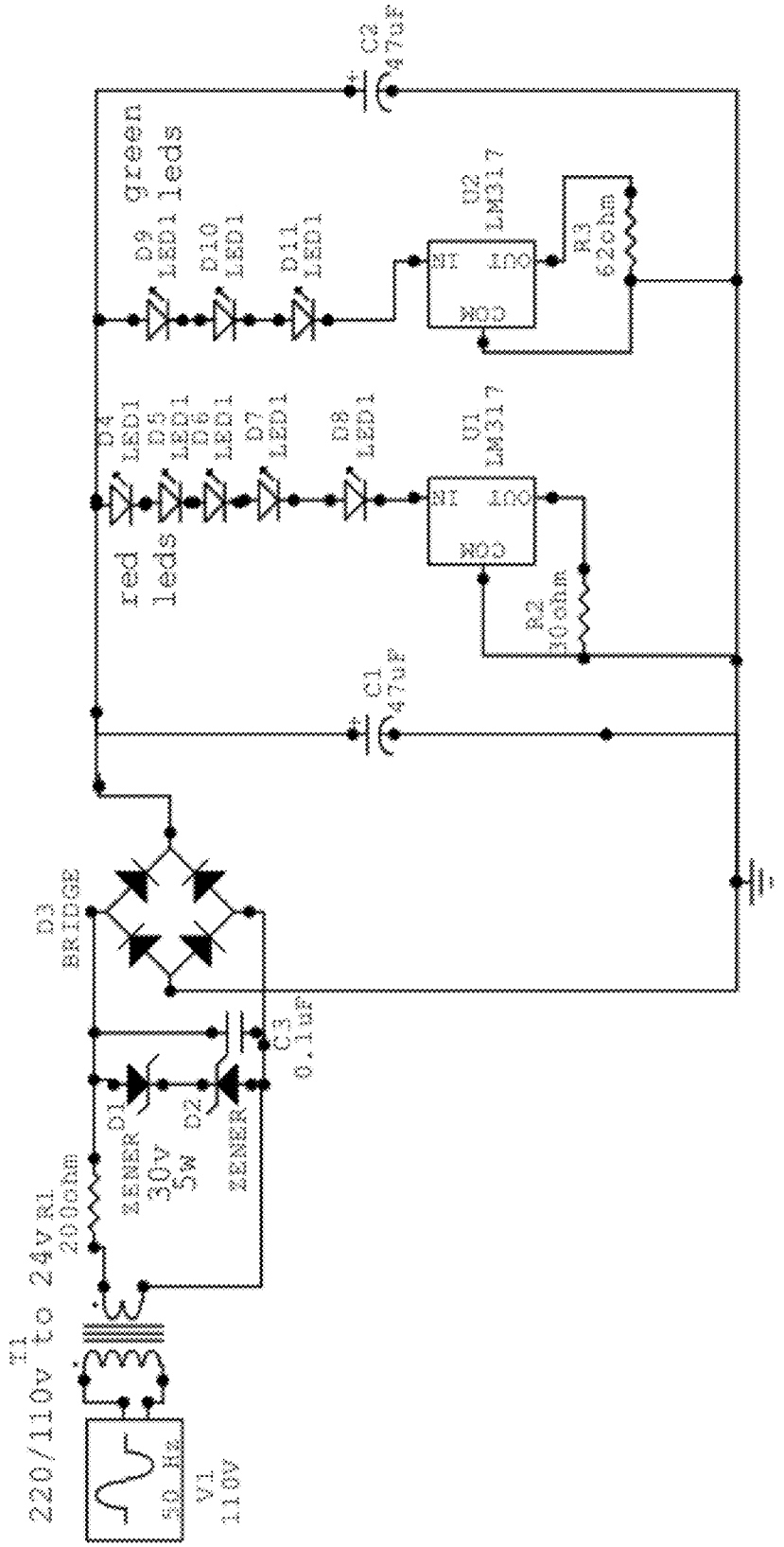

C2
47uF
D9 green LED1 leds
D10 LED1
D11 LED1
U2 LM317
IN OUT ADJ
R3 62ohm
D4 LED1
D5 LED1
D6 LED1
D7 LED1
D8 LED1
U1 LM317
red leds
R2 10ohm
C1 47uF
D3 BRIDGE
C3 0.1uF
D1 ZENER 30v 5w
D2 ZENER
R1 200ohm 24v
T1 220/110v to 24v
V1 110v 50 Hz

FIG. 17

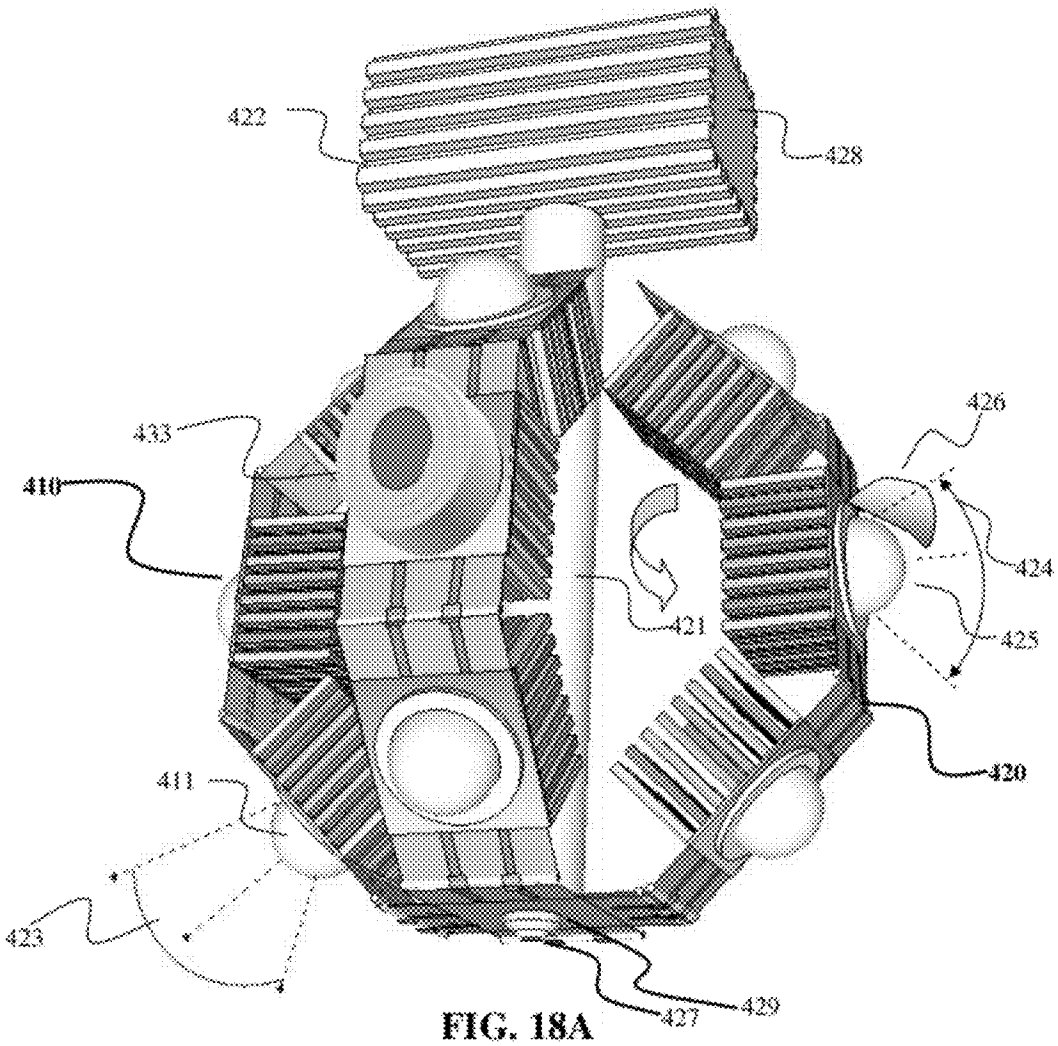


FIG. 18A

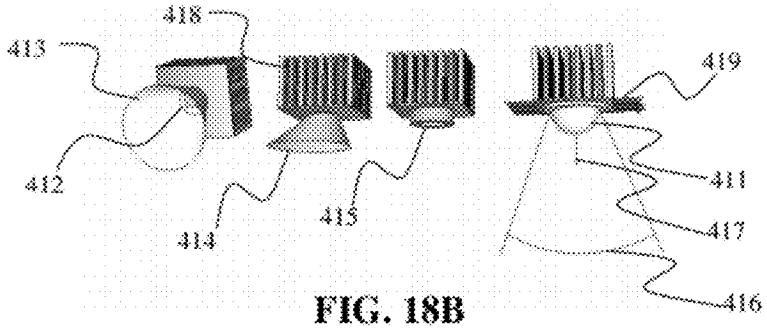


FIG. 18B

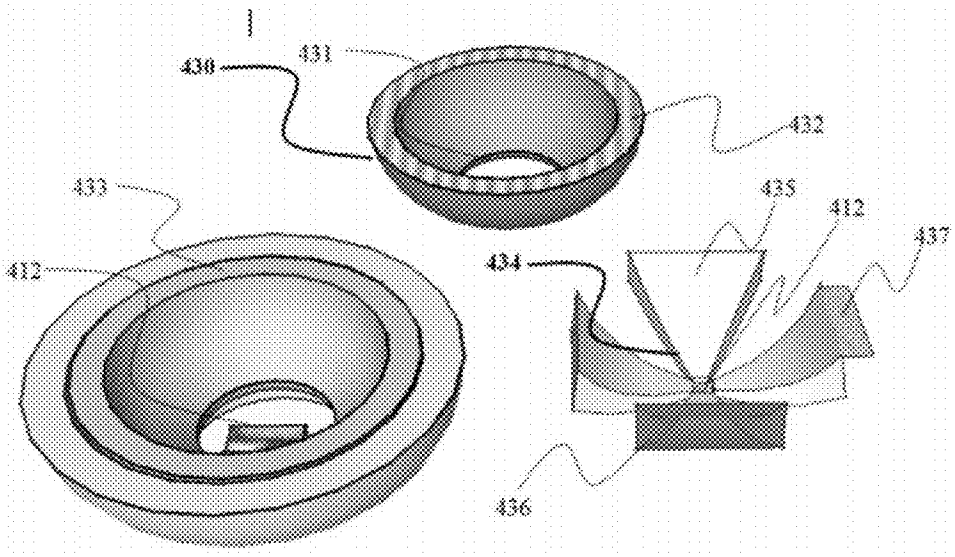


FIG. 19

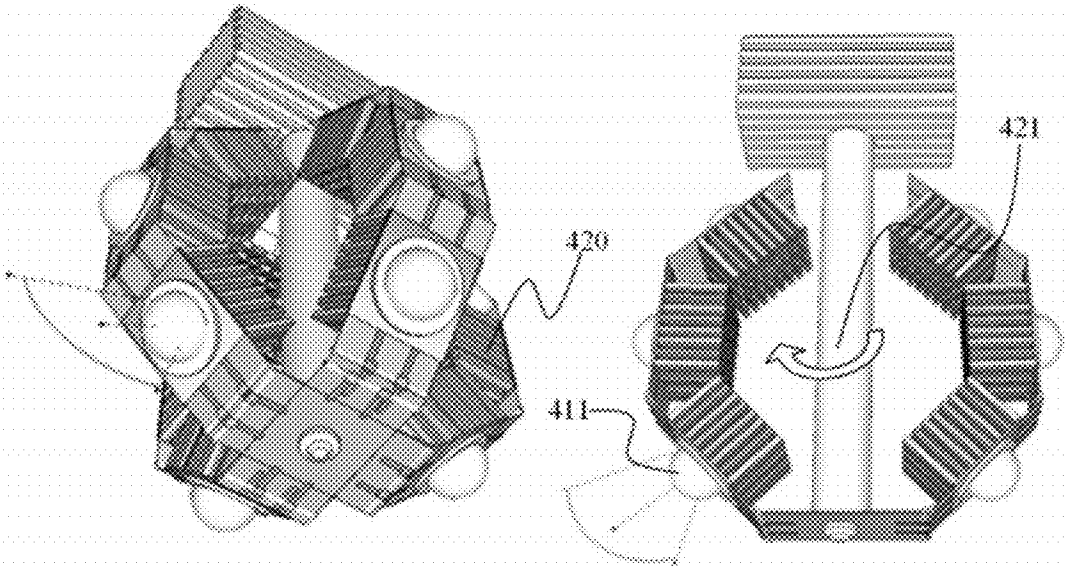


FIG. 20A FIG. 20B

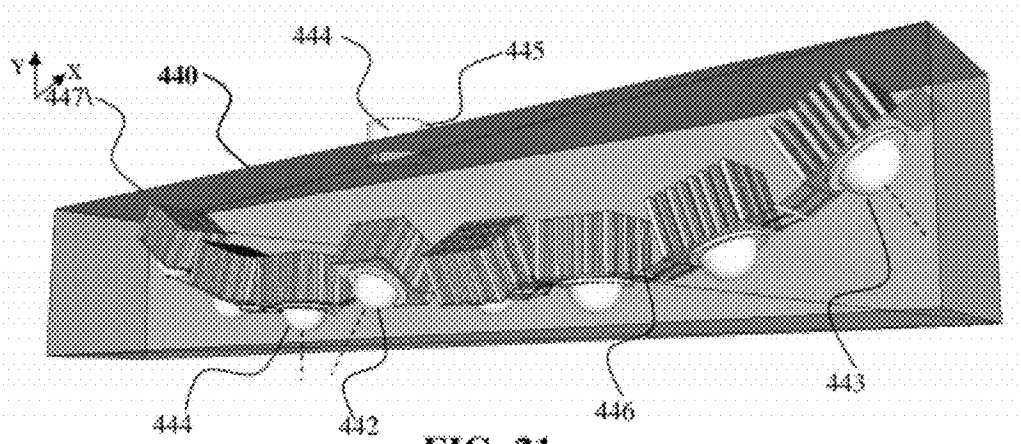

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FIG. 21

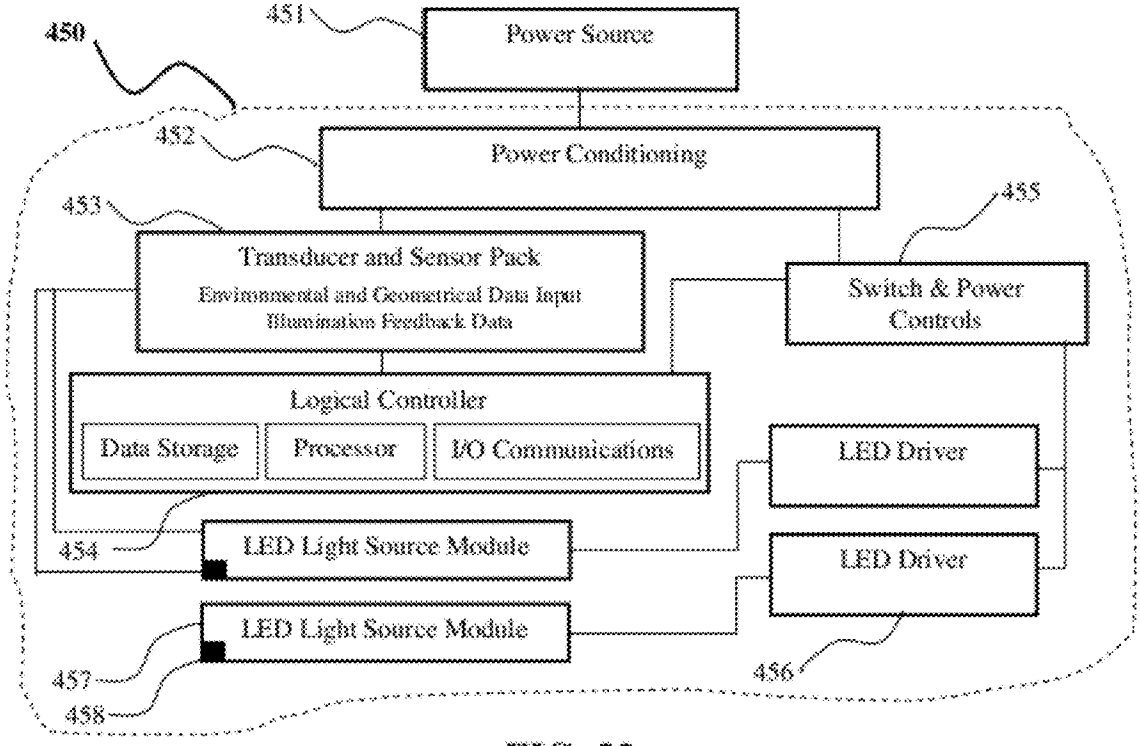

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Power Source
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Power Conditioning
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455
Transducer and Sensor Pack
Environmental and Geometrical Data Input
Illumination Feedback Data
Switch & Power Controls
Logical Controller
Data Storage
Processor
I/O Communications
LED Driver
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LED Light Source Module
LED Driver
LED Light Source Module
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FIG. 22

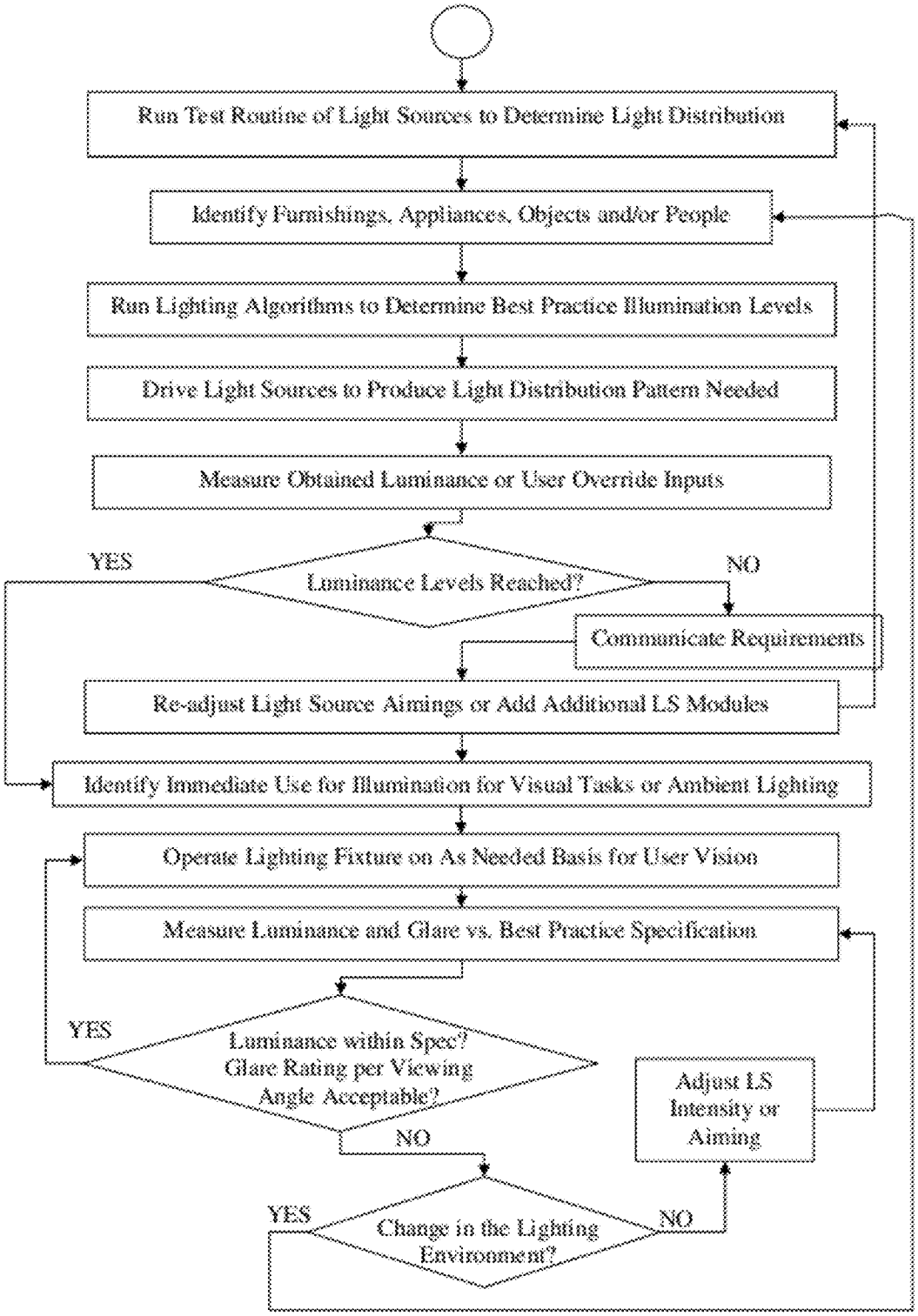

Run Test Routine of Light Sources to Determine Light Distribution
Identify Furnishings, Appliances, Objects and/or People
Run Lighting Algorithms to Determine Best Practice Illumination Levels
Drive Light Sources to Produce Light Distribution Pattern Needed
Measure Obtained Luminance or User Override Inputs
YES
Luminance Levels Reached?
NO
Communicate Requirements
Re-adjust Light Source Aimings or Add Additional LS Modules
Identify Immediate Use for Illumination for Visual Tasks or Ambient Lighting
Operate Lighting Fixture on As Needed Basis for User Vision
Measure Luminance and Glare vs. Best Practice Specification
YES
Luminance within Spec? Glare Rating per Viewing Angle Acceptable?
Adjust LS Intensity or Aiming
NO
YES
Change in the Lighting Environment?
NO

Fig. 23

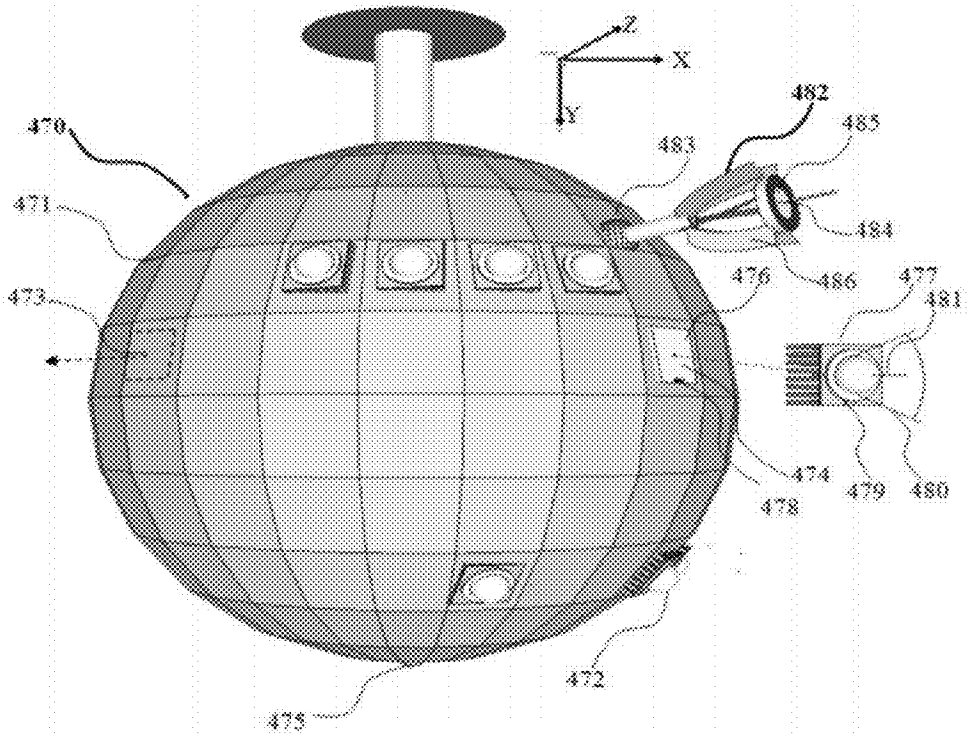


FIG. 24

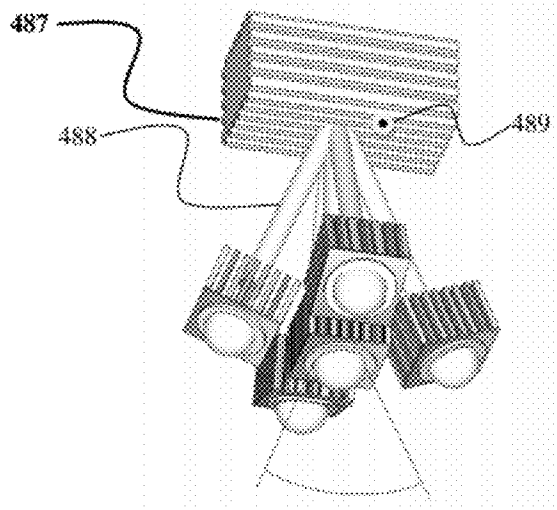


FIG. 25A

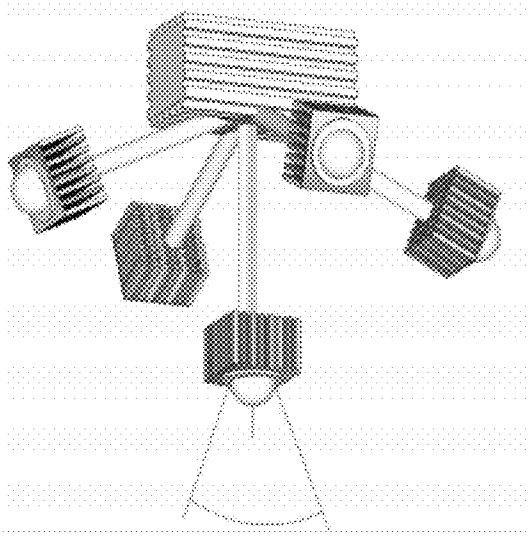


FIG. 25B

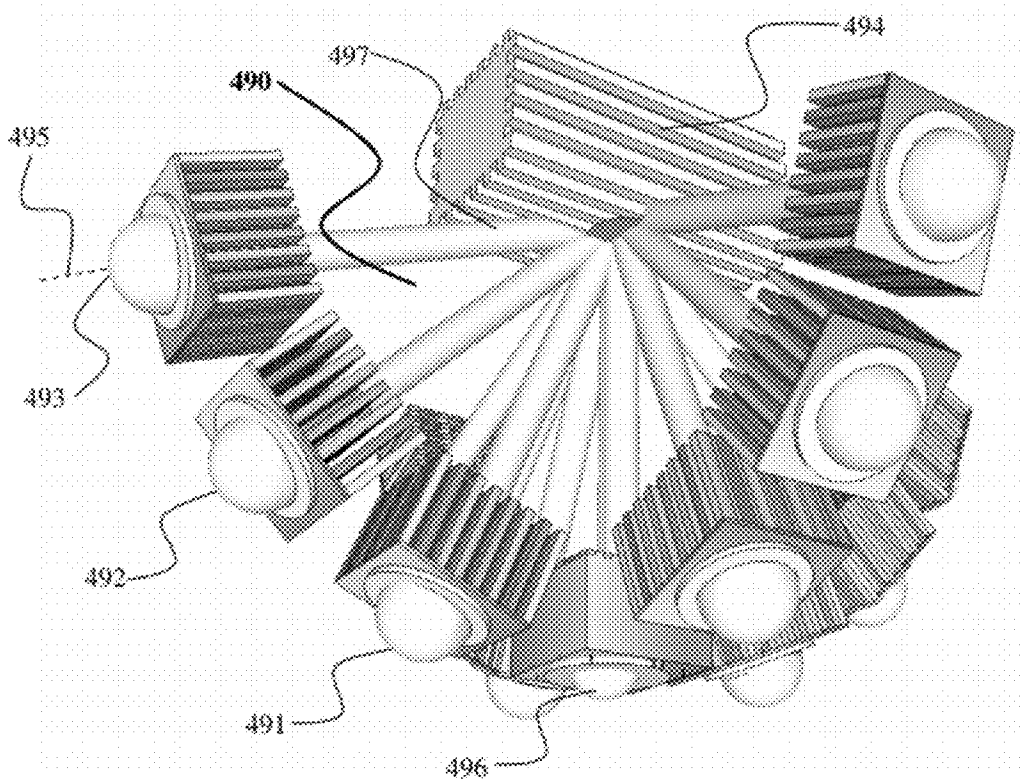


FIG. 26

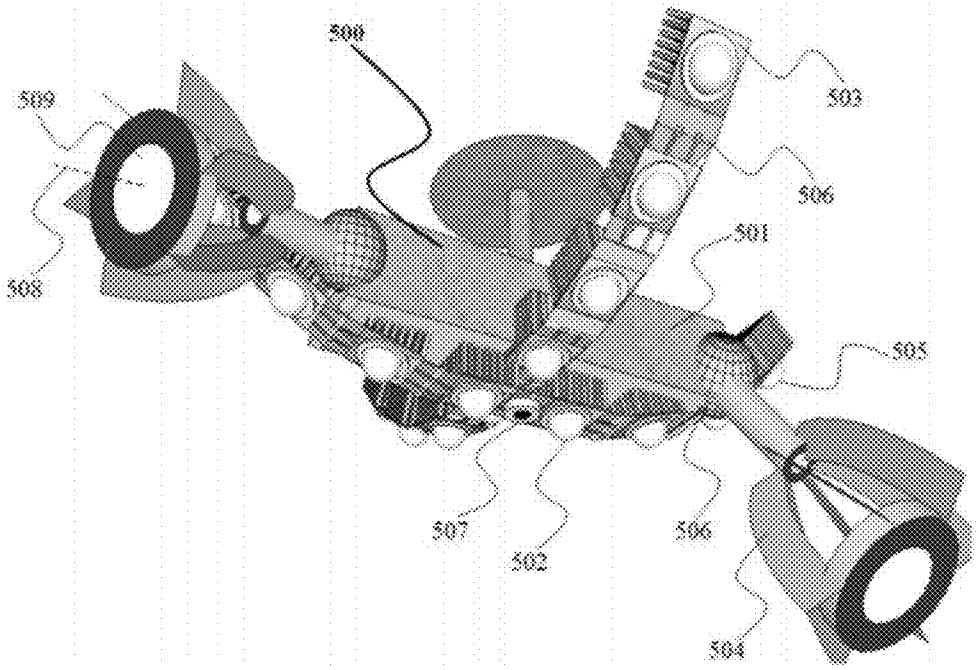


FIG. 27

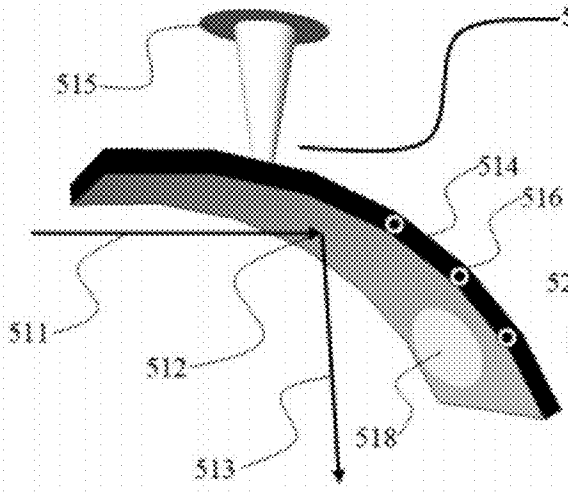


FIG. 28A

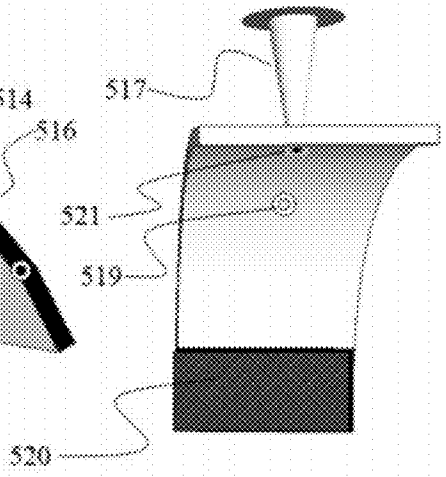


FIG. 28B

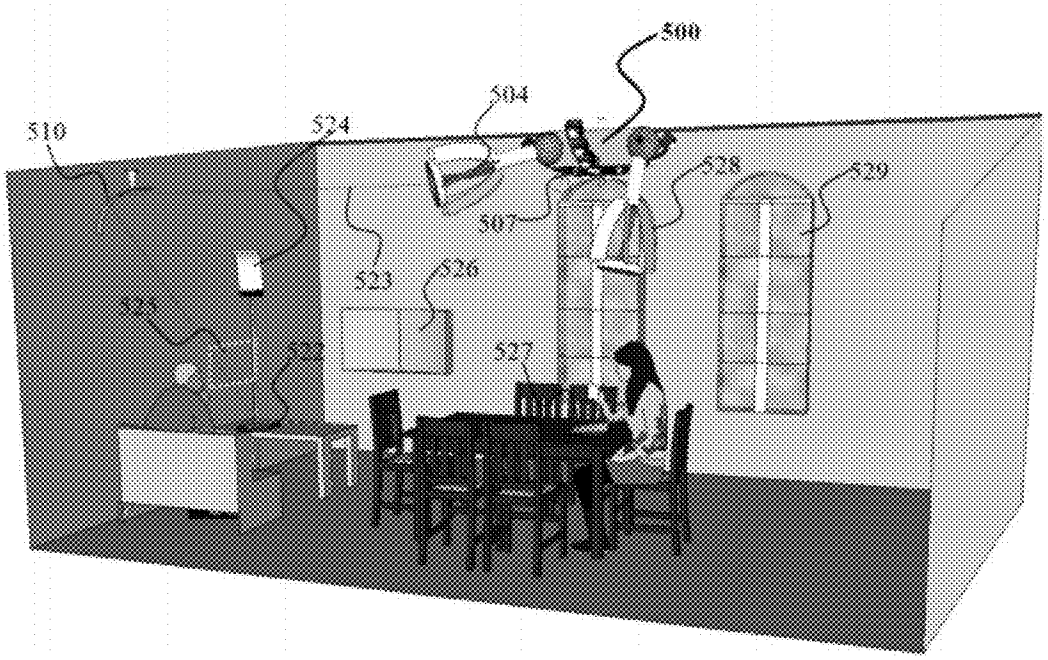

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FIG. 29

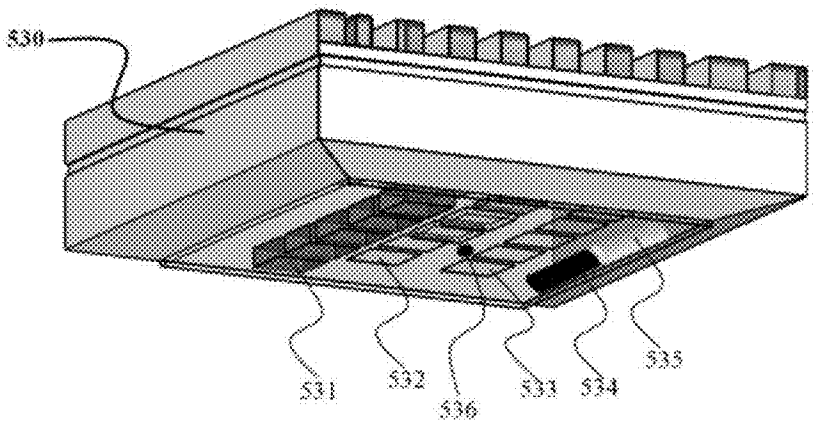

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FIG. 30

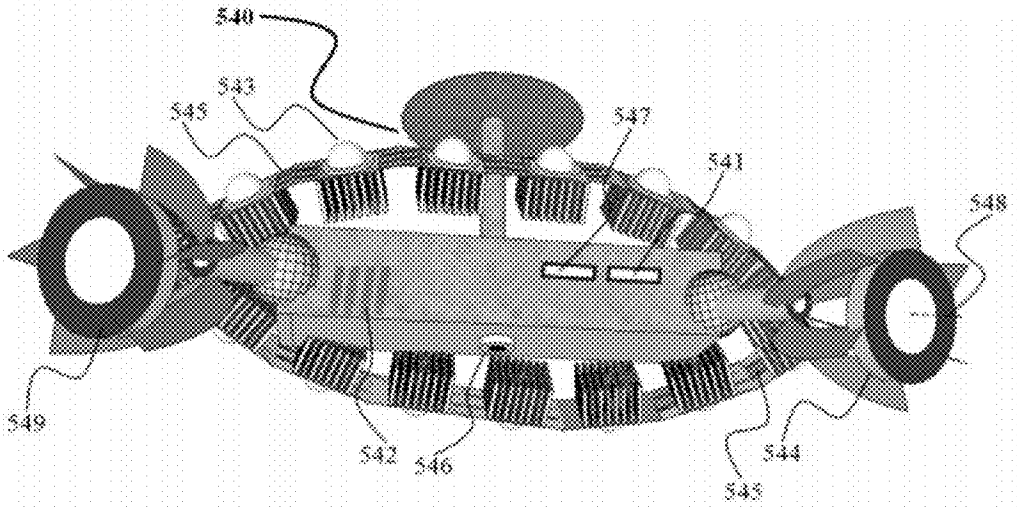

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FIG. 31

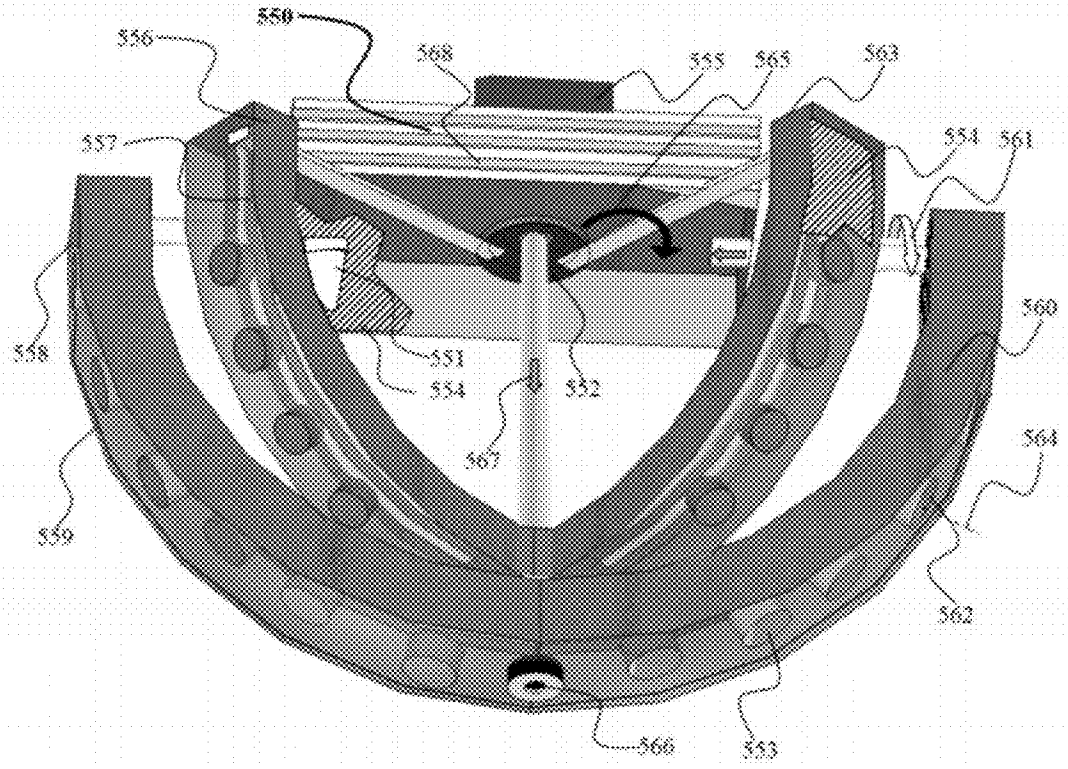

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FIG. 32

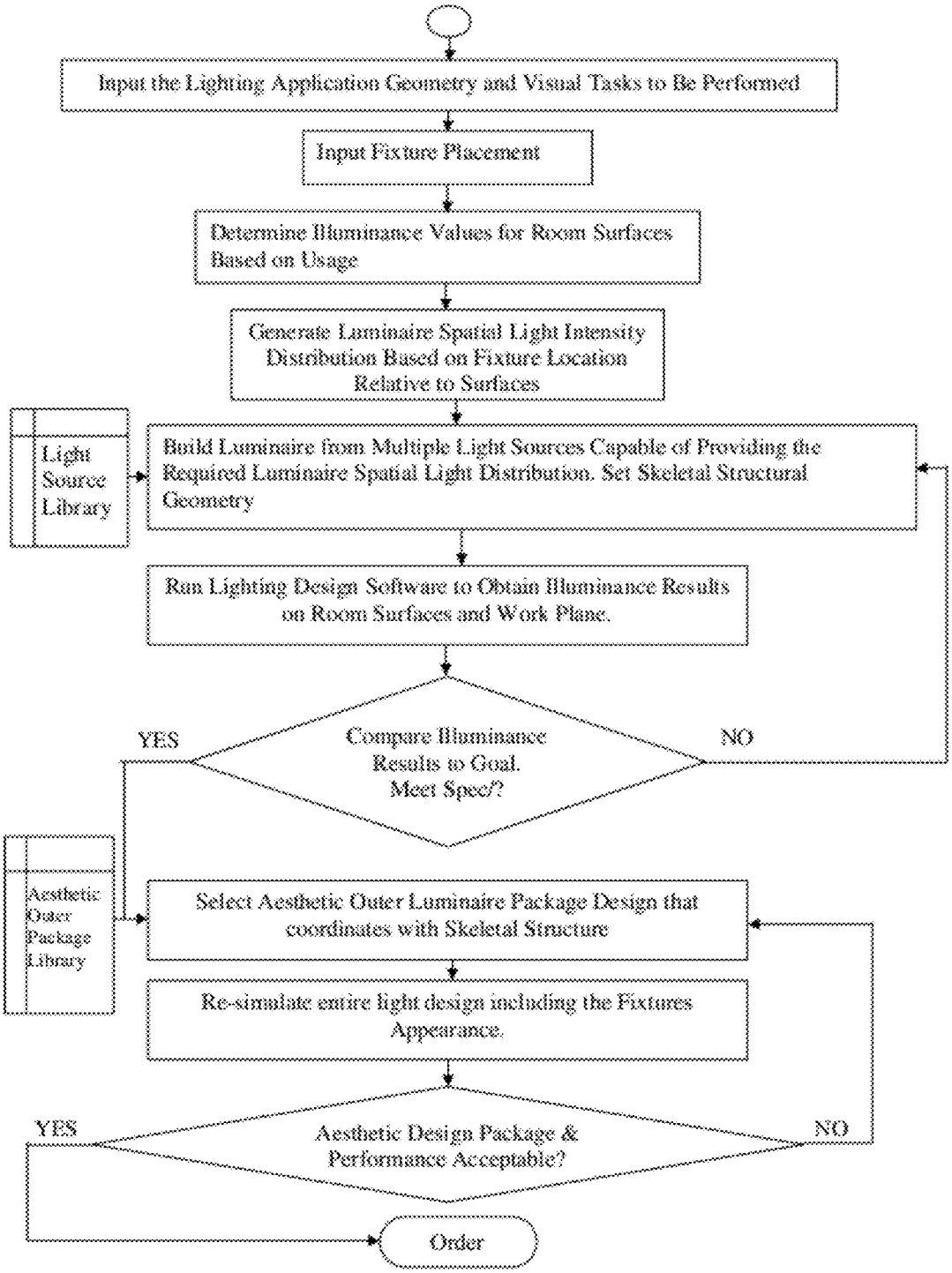

Input the Lighting Application Geometry and Visual Tasks to Be Performed
Input Fixture Placement
Determine Illuminance Values for Room Surfaces Based on Usage
Generate Luminaire Spatial Light Intensity Distribution Based on Fixture Location Relative to Surfaces
Light Source Library
Build Luminaire from Multiple Light Sources Capable of Providing the Required Luminaire Spatial Light Distribution. Set Skeletal Structural Geometry
Run Lighting Design Software to Obtain Illuminance Results on Room Surfaces and Work Plane.
Compare Illuminance Results to Goal. Meet Spec/?
YES
NO
Aesthetic Outer Package Library
Select Aesthetic Outer Luminaire Package Design that coordinates with Skeletal Structure
Re-simulate entire light design including the Fixtures Appearance.
Aesthetic Design Package & Performance Acceptable?
YES
NO
Order

FIG. 33

DETECTOR CONTROLLED ILLUMINATING SYSTEM

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application claims the benefit under 35 U.S.C. .sctn. 119(e) of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/395,308 filed Jul. 12, 2002, entitled: Multiple light source illumination system; and U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/535,981, filed Oct. 17, 2011 entitled Adjustable Lighting Fixture, the disclosures of which are all expressly incorporated herein by reference; and this application is a continuation-in-part application of, and claims the benefit under 35 U.S.C. .sctn. 120 from, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/604,360, entitled "Multiple Light-Source Illuminating System" filed on Jul. 14, 2003. The entire content of this non-provisional patent application is incorporated herein by this reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention is in the field of radiation producing devices. More particularly, the present invention is in the technical field of lighting fixtures. However, radiation used for headlamps, heating, night vision, UV or visible light curing, medical X-rays and other radiation uses are covered as well. General lighting fixtures otherwise known as luminaires will be used as the primary example while other irradiating devices such as infrared heaters are covered as well. The invention relates to multiple light source illuminating devices intended to replace incandescent, fluorescent and HID luminaries in general and specialty lighting applications.

Definitions, Terms, Elements

In order to clarify the intent of the present invention and its dissimilar aspects from prior art, a nomenclature system is established.

Used herein illumination refers to the deliberate application of light to achieve some practical or aesthetic effect. Correct illumination or recommend lighting practice refers to lighting industry standards and recommendations for the illumination of living, recreation, architectural and work areas as described in standards and handbooks published by industry professional organizations such as the Illuminating Engineering Society, the International Association of Lighting Designers, IALD or International Commission on Illumination CIE.

Lamp: A lamp, other than a reflector lamp, is generally a device that generates light radially from the source. Due to the physics involved in the light generation process, it is difficult at the source to gain control of the spatial light propagation. A reflector lamp will partially control the emitted light which hits the reflector, but will not control the remaining light emanating from the filament or discharge tube. A lamp other than a solid-state lamp will generally produce light over a wide range of spectrum. The overall color is a function of the physics involved in the generation of the different photon energies. While some lamps spectra are closer to sunlight and have a good color rendering in relation thereto, other lamps such as low-pressure sodium are highly monochromatic with a yellow-orange appearance. A color temperature in degrees Kelvin based on the color of an incandescent filament is used to describe a lamp. An incandescent lamp color will be termed "warm" at 2000 Kelvin and a Metal Halide "cool" at 4000K. In general, there is no ability to affect the color over the intensity level even where dimming is afforded. A lamp is also intended to be a replaceable element. Lamps are constructed according to universal standards which allow for the substitution of lamps by other manufacturers. Prior-art lamps are thus provided with bulky bases which fit into bulky sockets and do not lend themselves to being permanently wired into printed circuit boards or bonded onto electronic chips.

Luminaire: A Lighting Fixture or luminaire (the terms are used interchangeably) is a device which is constructed around the lamp to provide lighting specific to the application including non-lighting considerations such as aesthetics, safety etc. Some LF designs are primarily based on aesthetics while others are based on tailoring the lumen output such that the lighting fixture output meets the visual task at hand. Between these two extremes there are many possible designs, with maintenance, fixture cost, hazardous and rough service location considerations also playing a role. This is essentially why the industry produces so many different types of luminaires. One type for high industrial building ceilings known as high-bay lighting, another for office lighting and a third for roadway lighting and a fourth for illuminating corridors. Each fixture has its photometric distribution characteristics, that is, how many candela at what angle are exiting from the luminaire. Other luminaire considerations include keeping the lighting from causing discomfort glare or from being a source of veiling reflections. The purely technical goal is to get the required amount of light at the work surfaces where visual tasks are carried out by man, animals, plants and machines. A LF has a longer life than the lamp, and the lamp is meant to be replaceable within the fixture. A luminaire is wired directly to the electrical mains while a lamp due to its need to be replaced has a base which fits into a socket by way of which the lamp receives its power. Prior art solid-state lamp assemblies are considered lamps, as they have no provision for being connected to the mains. A luminaire has apparatus whereby it is attached to the building structure while a lamp is mechanically affixed to the lamp holder or socket. Another aspect of distinction is, that in general, correct lighting practice principles are used to guide in the design of a LF while a lamp is "bare" and is expected to have reflectors, refractors, shades and louvers to prevent glare and redirect its rays to increase light utilization.

Digital: The term digital used herein in refers to the luminaire concept as espoused by teachings of this invention and is loosely defined in parallel to the fine control associated with digital equipment. The multiple light sources of specific characteristics provide quanta of power and spectrum which are smoothly added or detracted to generate a changed lighting effect. The digital aspect arises from the sufficient progression of values, varying by minute degrees to produce a continuum so as be non-discernable or irrelevant to the user. The added controllability is realized by breaking up the light-production, into discrete, specifically aimable, and dimmable elements which can be addressed by control electronics for the purpose of affecting the intensity, spectrum and spatial distribution of spectrum and of intensity of the illumination provided by the luminaire of the present invention.

The overall combination of control capability and discrete light sources yields a digital lighting fixture. The terminology "digital" as used herein also refers to the discrete nature of the multiple LED lamps provided in the luminaire.

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whereby, "digital" control results from the individual control of the discrete, i.e., "digital" lighting elements, the LEDs, in the luminaire.

Correct lighting practice: A bare incandescent lamp illuminating a room is arbitrarily termed poor lighting practice. The bare light bulb hooked up to the electric power via a light switch, causes glare, wastes light, delivering the light to useless areas, has no provision for dimming and is energy inefficient. The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) as well as other professional groups such as the International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD) have developed recommended lighting practices for specific applications in indoor and outdoor lighting. These recommendations and equations for implementing the recommendations can be found in the IESNA Lighting Handbook, 8th and/or 9th Editions (available from the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America 120 Wall St. Floor 17 New York, N.Y. 10005 included herein by reference. Factors in good lighting include lighting intensity levels which may be based on the age of the users of the light, the color rendering capacity of the light source, its color temperature, the non-production of glare, veiling reflections and energy efficiency amongst others. Recommendations for all aspects of lighting in terms of intensity, distribution, color temperature, color temperature as a function of light intensity and correct color rendering exist in the literature in terms of lighting applications that is the environment to be illuminated, in parameters such as lux for intensity, CRI for color rendering index and Visual Comfort Parameter (VCP) for glare. In recent years, the Unified Glare Rating (UGR) as recommended by the CIE has become widely accepted as a general formula for assessing glare. While the US may still use VCP ratings, all the lighting-practice engineering organizations worldwide have standards and recommended ratings for different activities. For example lighting levels of 500 lux and a UGR of 19 is recommended in offices while industrial areas intended for coarse work a UGR of 28 can tolerated. In good lighting practice, attention is given by lighting designers to the correct amount of uplight, that is, light exiting from the luminaire towards the ceiling, which prevents a gloomy "dark cave" effect. Attention is also given to the cut-off angle of the luminaire, usually provided by shielding elements, such that high intensity rays are not emitted at an angle where they enter the occupant's eye during normal activity. A correctly designed luminaire for indoor lighting may provide 30% uplight and 70% downlight in the angles from the nadir 0 to 60 degrees and then again 135 to 170 degrees. A governing equation in lighting and used in "reverse luminaire design" of the present invention is the cosine law or Lambert's law, Equation 1:

$$E = \frac{I\cos\theta}{D^2}$$

Where: E=Illuminance in lux or footcandles, I=Luminous intensity in candles, D=Distance between the source and the point of calculation in meters or feet, θ=Angle of light incidence with illuminated surface

Another useful equation used in fixture analysis to avoid glare producing designs yields the level of discomfort on the DeBoer scale. The DeBoer rating scale (1-9) describes the level of discomfort where: 1=Unbearable, 3=Disturbing, 5=Just acceptable, 7=Satisfactory, and 9=Just noticeable. The allowable level is dependent on the application. A surgeon performing an operation may be very sensitive to glare while a chlorophyll producing plant is not. The equation to determine the rating is Equation 2:

$$W=5.0-2.0\ \mathrm{LOG}\ [E_i/(0.003)(1+\mathrm{SQRT}(La/0.04))(\varphi_i)\ \hat{}\ 0.46]$$

where: W=glare sensation on a scale of 1 to 9, La=adaptation luminance (cd/m 2), E_i=illumination directed at observer's eyes from the i-th source (lux), φ_i=glare angle of the i-th source (minutes of arc) from the observer's line of sight.

Using these equations and correct lighting practice covering preferred angles of lighting for visual tasks, it is possible to design from the specific application's illumination requirements the spatial light intensity distribution and yet avoid manufacturing a glare producing luminaire.

The present invention generally relates to an improved illuminator for use both in general and specialty lighting. The term general lighting includes use in living spaces such as lighting in industrial, commercial, residential and transportation vehicle applications. By specialty lighting we mean emergency lighting activated during power failures, fires or smoke accumulations in buildings, microscope, stage illuminators, billboard front-lighting, hazardous and difficult access location lighting, backlighting for signs, agricultural lighting etc.

Energy Efficiency and Costs. In an example to illustrate the advantages of an energy efficient lighting solution, the total cost of lighting a typical 300 foot by 300 foot retail facility at 1000 lux over a 10 year period using state of the art (2002) HID luminaires is assessed. Including equipment, installation and maintenance cost the total bill is over one million dollars. Approximately 80% of this is in energy costs. The commodity being purchased is lighting, the major lifecycle cost is electricity. To cut down on costs and also conserve energy it desirable to maximize the use of light generated. A Japanese survey of office luminaires (Japan Lighting Information Services-Seminar-Save Energy of Office Lighting-Loss of light in luminaire-.htm) shows LF efficiencies (light that exits the fixture vs. the light produced by the lamp) in an open office fluorescent luminaire without anti-glare louvers to be 84% while one equipped with louvers is only 52% efficient. The "utilization factor" (which equals the light flux which arrives at a work site (e.g. upper surface of a desk) divided by the sum of all light flux of the lamp) is 74% for an open fixture and only 50% for louvered version. This however, is still not what the customer is paying for. The customer is after the best lighting solution at minimal energy cost. Chances are, as experienced lighting designers know, that the light intensity, even in a good lighting design, is still not evenly distributed over the work surfaces. While care is taken in the lighting design computer runs not to fall below the minimum illumination intensity at any point in the room, there are non-trivial excesses at some points in the lighting layout design. This excess light, wasted energy as far as the customer is concerned, probably accounts for another 10% loss. While a fluorescent may be appear to be a superior and very efficient light source at 80 lumen per watt vs. 30 lumen per watt for LEDs this is not actually the case, in actuality 60% of the fluorescent LF's light is wasted. Thus, in terms of energy use, a properly designed LED luminaire can be, with the proper luminaire design of the present invention, as effective lumen per lumen as any discharge light source in illuminating living areas.

Expressed in terms of the above background and nomenclature, it is the goal of this disclosure to teach how to construct a luminaire which will [illegible] the [illegible] while

needed, exactly in the correct amounts to accomplish visual tasks and/or create an atmosphere. The controlled radiation of light into a living space with a specific spatial intensity distribution also having optimal spectral characteristics for the seeing tasks at hand is provided by the present invention. Each visual task application has its own correct lighting solution with optimal light intensities, light color emanating at angles which will not cause glare that interferes with vision or causes discomfort. Tasks in living spaces vary with time so it is another objective of the present invention is to provide the optimal lighting solution in "real time" (at that specific moment in time).

As a light source of ever increasing choice, LEDs have been packaged in numerous forms and used in lighting applications. Special control circuits have been developed to take advantage of the variability offered by the new light source and are today being offered as a solution to specific applications. In general however the design process has not zeroed in on providing the correct lighting solution. A number of LED illumination devices create "white" light by combining two or more LEDs of various wavelengths. White LEDs are also made using phosphors. The goal has not been to vary this color spectrum in real time to coordinate with the usage of the living space. The term "white" light is loosely interpreted to cover a range of illuminating light having spectral light distributions acceptable to the user for that application. HPS's yellow light has even been called white by some and the term is exclusive only of almost monochromatic sources such as LEDs and LPS lamps. The terms light spectrum, spectra, spectrum, spectral and color are used to refer to the relative spectral power distribution of the light source.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

In prior art illuminating devices a universal light source such as an incandescent or fluorescent lamp emits light in many directions up to a 360 degree light distribution where in practice only a limited angular light distribution is needed in order for people to carry out visual tasks. So as to control the light distribution to certain angles, reflectors and refractors are used to redirect the light where it is needed. A great deal of light is wasted in the inherent inefficiencies in redirecting the light and shielding the glare causing light sources. In addition the actual placement of the light rays where needed, but not beyond, is often inexact and wasteful.

In addition it necessary to have a wide variety of lighting fixtures each with dedicated optics and even then, there is much wasted light or insufficient lighting in the area covered by the luminaire. In addition the light intensity and color spectrum of the luminaire is fixed while the visual tasks going on in the space are changing all the time. Usually, there is no provision for either detecting the changes going on in the living space nor is the lighting fixture equipped with apparatus to effect the necessary changes in the lighting. In addition individuals often have their personal lighting preferences as to the color and intensity of the lighting. Prior art lighting fixtures have no provision for the localized provision of preferred lighting to individuals.

A prior art LED light strip consists of circuitry including a plurality of LEDs mounted on a substrate and connected to electrical conductors. The circuitry is sometimes encased within a tube like, partially transparent protective sheathing and connected to a power source for selective LED illumination. Two examples of LED strip types are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,130,909 to Gross, entitled Emergency Lighting Strip and U.S. Pat. No. 4,597,033 to Meggs et al., entitled Flexible Elongated Lighting System. Such strips are utilized in a variety of indoor and outdoor configurations such as emergency pathway markers, exit door indicators and ornamental lighting arrangements. The LEDs are being used as outline markers where the lighting strips are the object to be seen. It is not the purpose of the lighting strips to project light on other objects to make them visible. In other applications, where lighting distributed evenly along an area is required, these strips are placed at an edge. No attempt is made at obtaining an even illumination outward from the edge to the area perpendicular to the long dimension.

LED lamps and ballast systems can reduce maintenance costs due to an average rated life of 100,000 hours. This is five to eight times the typical service life of conventional fluorescent and metal halide lamps. The present system is especially well suited for applications where relamping is difficult or expensive.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,346,777 issued Feb. 12, 2002 to Kim teaches an illuminating lamp assembly. An LED lamp apparatus comprises a plurality of LED lamps including at least one LED chip mounted on a Printed Circuit Board (PCB), on which a driver circuit and/or a control circuit are provided in a printed circuit pattern to drive and/or control the LED chip. The device is independent of the lighting application and is simply a lamp not a lamp and fixture combination.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,018,290 issued May 28, 1991 to Kozek et al. Teaches an exit sign with a plurality of low voltage incandescent lamps mounted on a PCB to provide illumination from within a housing. There is no combination of different light source characteristics to build a new combined light source characteristic and this is a lamp replacement not a LF fit for general illumination.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,577,832 to Lodhie one of the originators of the use of LEDs for illumination, describes a multilayer LED assembly which is used as a replacement light for equipment used in manufacturing environments. On each layer of the multi-layer assembly, there are multiple LEDs which are mounted perpendicular to a base. The base is used to provide electrical and mechanical connection to a socket. The LED assembly may utilize multiple layers of LEDs, with each layer itself having multiple LEDs. The LEDs in each layer are mounted in a direction perpendicular to the base which results in light emanating in a direction perpendicular to the base. The LED assembly is used as a replacement lamp for equipment used in manufacturing environments. There is no attempt to match the light distribution to the task at hand.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,379,022 issued Apr. 30, 2002 to Amerson, et al. titled Auxiliary illuminating device having adjustable color temperature, describes an auxiliary illuminating device that has a least two preset ratios of light adjustable color temperature. The color temperature is adjusted by varying the light output at least two independently adjustable light sources. The light source is an array of at least 2 colors. The light source typically uses at least one set of LED's. The application specifically relates to use in producing correct lighting for photography but does not relate to general illumination so that its control equipment does not correlate the overall illuminance level to the color temperature over the range of illumination nor does its control equipment integrate the aiming function for correct light distribution. Essentially the auxiliary illuminating device is a lamp replacement for a photographic flash lamp.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,340,868, Illumination components, discloses a current control for an LED lighting assembly, where each current-controlled unit is [illegible]

capable of receiving illumination color information on a computer lighting network. The teachings of the above patent are incorporated herein by reference. Although this patent discloses how to construct controllable illumination light systems this patent does not relate to the concept of control within the parameters of accurate light distribution and correct lighting practice.

In U.S. Pat. No. 6,498,440 Stam, et al. incorporated herein by reference, describes a lamp assembly incorporating optical feedback to produce an illuminator assembly that is capable of utilizing a plurality of light sources to produce a desired resultant hue. The assembly includes a processor, a memory, a plurality of light sources and a detector. The memory is coupled to the processor and stores data and information. Each of the plurality of light sources are coupled to the processor and produce a different color. The processor is capable of independently controlling the intensity of each light source so as to produce a desired resultant hue. The detector is also coupled to the processor. The detector provides the processor with information which the processor utilizes in determining how to adjust the intensity of each of the light sources to provide the desired resultant hue.

In an earlier patent U.S. Pat. No. 5,803,579 titled: Illuminator assembly incorporating LEDs, by Turnbull, incorporated herein by reference, the different color LEDs light output is coincident in such a manner that this overlapped and mixed illumination forms a metameric white color and has sufficient intensity and color rendering qualities to be an effective illuminator. Electronic circuits for control of the independent light sources consist of microprocessor controlled adjustable current sources.

United States Patent Application 20020130326 issued to Tamura et al., incorporated herein by reference, describes a lighting device that includes a plurality of LEDs arranged in an at least two-dimensionally dispersed manner; a transparent resin layer that covers the plurality of LEDs in an integrated form; a photo-detecting unit that detects an intensity of light emitted from the plurality of LEDs using a photodetector and a power supply circuit unit that controls driving of the plurality of LEDs based on a detection output from the photo-detecting unit. The purpose is to have a predetermined balance of light intensities of the colors according to an output detected as to each color by the photo-detecting unit. This device does not integrally cover the light distribution function within and does not correlate the lighting spectrum with the light intensity. It also does not provide a method to handle color shift over the lifetime of the illuminating device.

In U.S. Pat. No. 6,528,954 a light bulb is provided which may include a housing, an illumination source, disposed in the housing, and a processor, disposed in the housing, for controlling the illumination source. The housing may be configured to fit a conventional light fixture. The processor may control the intensity or the color of the illumination source. The housing may also house a transmitter and/or receiver. Although this device includes the desirable communications control aspect, this device does not relate to a multi-light source capability which allows for the smooth variation lighting and its even distribution.

In the prior-art approach, the LED manufacture and the power supply manufacture are separate units. Typically one power supply is good for a certain number of LEDs. This is similar to the historical lamp and ballast segregation that came about probably because one manufacturer was working with glass and the other with copper. Electronic light sources are semiconductor components as are the power supply components. A unique opportunity for integration exists in solid-state luminaire design which has not being taken advantage of.

In many energy conserving multi resident stairwell lighting systems the lights are typically activated by pressing a button in the hallway or in each apartment. This requires special wiring between the switches and the central controller. In many other stairwells and hallways the lighting is always left on wasting energy. With long life LED lamps, a low energy distributed lighting solution could always be on for orientation purposes and would only turn on to full output when activity levels require the lights turning on, using integral optoelectronic motion detectors.

A home lighting fixture is often left on at full power when really only lighting for orientation purposes is required. A light switch on the wall is provided and sometimes this has a dimmer option. An electronic power supply with programmable electronic controller with communication over a dedicated data line or alternately over the power line or alternately wireless is also possible in present art such as with the DALI (Digital Addressable Lighting Interface) protocol. With digital signals, power supplies become individually addressable compared to analog systems where only circuits are addressable. Additionally, DALI allows for bi-directional communication between the power supply and control. DALI also brings the capability of broadcast messaging to ballasts. With DALI or any other protocol much more than dimming can be effected. Control of spectrum, occupancy sensor controls and specific spatial intensity distributions can be modified. However, the present-day lamp or fixture is not designed to fully and efficiently take advantage of these new control capabilities.

In United States Patent Application 20100302779 by Chemel titled Fixture with Replaceable Light Bars he describes an intelligent LED-based lighting system. The LED based lighting systems may include fixtures with one or more of rotatable LED light bars, integrated sensors, onboard intelligence to receive signals from the LED light bars and control the LED light bars. In this system while an adjustable system of moving bars is illustrated so that the LED luminaire can retrofit a variety of older discharge lamp based luminaires, advantage has not been taken of the multiplicity of light sources to obtain a superior light distribution lighting solution that is now obtainable with multiple sources.

Spero in United States Patent Application 20040105264 describes the design of a multiple light source system using unique placements of the LEDs on the structure of a lighting fixture to generate an application specific light distribution pattern capable of providing recommended illuminance levels. The lighting fixture has means for being affixed within a living space to be illuminated in a unique orientation in relation to the surfaces therein. Subsequently, the lighting fixture is designed by positioning LED light sources thereon that emanate light in direction and intensity as required by the lighting application. The geometric layout is determined by using knowledge of the distances and angles from the light sources to the living-space surfaces as dictated by the inverse square law and Lambert's Cosine Law of Incidence. The combination of the unique placement of the LEDs on the lighting fixture and the unique orientation of the fixture in the living space results in the predetermined illuminance being obtained on the room surfaces. A problem with this technique can arise in non-standard illumination instances which may be the majority of lighting applications. For example in industrial plant lighting, such as in open chemical processing facilities or where [illegible]

machinery or other elements requiring an unpredictable light distribution. Much energy is wasted in these facilities with the wasted light often contributing to light pollution.

In another embodiment Spero describes a solution to this problem where an overabundance of LEDs are deployed on the fixture structure giving it the ability to illuminate in all directions at required intensities. The controller of the LEDs is coupled to a camera which analyzes surfaces and usage within the living space and adjusts the lighting accordingly. While the design is highly flexible it requires an over capacity of LEDs and the cost of driver and light sources would be high.

People need light for the performance of visual tasks, its aesthetic value or security. Light generated but not used by people is wasted energy, money and causes air and light pollution. Standard lighting fixtures, even those that are somewhat area based, such as a low bay or bedroom luminaire, because of the different object and usages within the area, either provide too much light and are wasteful or provide insufficient lighting inhibiting visual performance. Therefore it would be beneficial to have a lighting fixture that is further configurable to meet the demands of the actual lighting application where it has been installed. In addition it would be beneficial if the lighting fixture was responsive in real time to the lighting needs at that moment. It is no longer necessary to have fixtures providing illumination where there is nothing to be seen.

Thus there is a need for a lighting fixture having provision for the differentiation over space and time of the light's intensity and color that could be set-up in the field and/or adjusted in real-time to the changing lighting requirements. Such an exigency based fixture would provide correct illuminance in terms of chromaticity, homogeneous or aesthetic lighting generally and task lighting locally for the visual tasks at hand.

Prior art lighting practice utilizes an apparatus termed a luminaire or Lighting Fixture to provide illumination to indoor and outdoor living spaces, vehicles machinery etc for the performance of various visual tasks. A luminaire provides features other than just light which may include light distribution, shielding, man-machine-interfaces such as on/off switches, connection to power mains, apparatus for affixation to construction elements and aesthetics. A typical prior art luminaire is comprised of: a replaceable lamp, a lamp holder, wiring, optical control elements such as a reflectors and refractors, fasteners and brackets. In addition if the lamp has a negative resistance characteristic, then the luminaire includes power control elements such as a ballast. If a light control system is employed also included are elements including relays, logic controllers and communication devices which may be part of an electronic ballast design. All of these elements packaged together constitute a luminaire. In typical present day luminaire (lighting fixture) practice, a lamp with a mostly radially uniform spatial light distribution is placed within an optical assembly consisting of a reflector and or refractor for the purpose of having the light exit the luminaire in the desired direction and preferred distribution pattern. This is a process that involves cost and inefficiencies in redirecting the light.

Recently solid-state light sources have evolved from indicator lamps into illumination sources. The present art approach is to package these new lamp types into luminaires of the old lamp type with some minor adjustments. This was the case when fluorescents replaced incandescents and when HID replaced fluorescents. The question arises, is this really the best solution as far as functionality and construction are concerned. The question is especially cogent when the fact that solid state light sources are electronic devices with high reliability, long lifetimes and are capable of rapid change over a very wide operating range.

Examples of the inflexible prior-art approach based on today's designs include: lighting is often provided in rooms where daylight contributes significantly to the overall lighting level or in areas near the window but the lighting system is not flexible enough spatially to take advantage of the daylight contribution and reduce power; or the lighting is always on at maximum power irrespective of whether or not there is activity in the room to justify the lighting level.

Even when external dimming controls are provided to the lighting fixture, the color quality of the lighting is deleteriously affected. At a lower lighting level a warmer color temperature is generally required and the luminaire lamp color is not adjustable.

Lighting systems are generally based around a lamp source and lighting application. When a new lamp source arrives generally they are placed into present-day lighting luminaire designs which are not optimal for the new light source. LEDs are a light source which have a number of advantages due to relatively long life expectancy. In the future it is also expected that LEDs will have conversion efficiencies equivalent to those of discharge lamps. Presently however, the high cost of lumen per watt appears to make LEDs uneconomical for most lighting applications. A few applications of which step, stairwell, pathway and emergency lighting are examples require low lighting levels to begin with and thus present at this time a feasible application. An LED light source is well adapted to a number of additional applications. Very often in these additional applications the areas over which the lighting is to be provided are large and bringing electric power to the luminaire is a significant safety and cost consideration. An inherently low voltage light source such as an LED is suitable for use with safe 12 or 24 volt of a distributed power system with low current demands. The control of the light distribution, especially the beam cut-off necessary at low light levels to prevent discomfort, is well suited to the high directionality of the small LED light source. Maintenance of prior-art luminaires in outdoor applications and the requirement for watertight resealing increases fixture cost and complexity. Robustness of luminaires is another requirement as they located on ground level endangered by passersby contact or vandalism.

In prior art lighting fixture construction, the lamp, reflector, socket and ballast are separate units. Foremost, the lamp must be replaceable and thus access provided, because the lamp lifetime is less than other components in the fixture. The reflector is large, to envelope the light source and provide ray control, and is manufactured of special, highly reflective, material. The power-conditioning device such as a core and coil ballast or more recently electronic power transistor components differs again from the glass lamp, reflector and fixture material. The dissimilarity of the manufacturing technologies, operating lifetimes and materials results in a multi-component fixture assembly held together by fasteners which don't lend themselves to mass production and the luminaires are not factory sealed for life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a unique approach to solid-state illuminating devices that is a departure from conventional prior art LED lighting practice. Prior-Art LED lighting technology manufacturers have been taking LED junctions and packaging them in [illegible] powerful [illegible]

figurations to carry out the function of lamps. These LED lamps are teamed with reflectors and/or refractors similar to the techniques practiced with standard lamps or put on strips which is just another way of distributing the light over the area to be illuminated. This invention comprises a different approach which is to provide the end user with the most correct lighting solution not a new technology lamp to replace the old one. The present invention comprises a novel multi-light source approach to the design and construction of solid-state lighting fixtures (vs. solid-state lamps), which is termed a "Digital Lighting Fixture", due to the control of individual lighting element "digits" to provide the "correct" lighting solution for the situation at hand.

The invention embraces LED-illuminating devices covering a wide scope of applications including a room light and step light design as well as the general method for designing solid state luminaires from ground up from indoor to outdoor use in residences, factories, stores stadiums and streets. The general concept allows anyone to build a lighting fixture from the ground up, tailor made to the final application rather than building a fixture around a common lamp. This is because it difficult to control the high temperature processes of incandescent and discharge lamps. In addition it takes a tremendous amount of investment in tooling to manufacture an incandescent, fluorescent or HID lamp. Electronic components on the other hand are made of large quantities of discrete components which are masked or robotically placed on to substrates. These smaller building blocks can then be easily configured per specific applications.

This disclosure also teaches that when it comes to solid-state lighting big is not necessarily better. The approach of LED manufacturers trying to get into the lighting business by attempting to replicate the effect of present day lamps has been to make large, high current capacity, high lumen output electroluminescent junctions having marginally acceptable lighting characteristics. Lumileds Luxeon® DS25 Emitter running at 350 mA is an example of such an approach. In a few years manufacturers have raised currents from 50 mA to above 500 mA, at the time of this writing. These advances are certainly favorable at reducing costs and making LEDs a practical light source but attempting to get 1000 lumen (equivalent to a 60 W incandescent lamp) is not necessarily the best path to take, especially if it comes at the price of light conversion or distribution efficiency. In contrast to a prior art, single large, lamp replacement like light source, the present invention provides multiple, small sized sources of differing characteristics such that the effect of the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts. The determining size factor then becomes when is there a sufficient progression of values varying by minute degrees or continuum so as be non-discernable or irrelevant to the user. That is, LEDs are generally of a single wavelength (color, frequency), have small optics close in to the individual light sources since they operate coolly, and have stable conversion efficiency over a wide range of currents and light output. The added controllability offered by breaking the total light output up into discrete ("digital") specifically aimable and dimmable elements which can be addressed by control electronics to effect intensity, spectrum and spatial distribution of intensity and spectrum, yields a lighting fixture (vs. lamp) of unparalleled performance. Unique to this patent is the approach. It is the approach of a lighting manufacturer who provides lighting solutions versus that of a lamp manufacturer who produces a generic lamp.

The advance over prior art is a solid-state light source with increased 1. Efficiency—more effective lumen per watt electricity. 2. Durability—physical strength, life expectancy, lumen maintenance and spectral stability. 3. Lighting quality—as related to visual comfort and "atmosphere". 4. Functionality—ability to control the light placement, intensity and color temperature and do so as needed. 5. Energy savings 6. Lower overall lifecycle cost

Integrating the light source with power conditioning electronics, control circuitry and sensors gives additional cost benefits and functionality including: 1. Mass production capability 2. Sealed-for-life fixture 3. Exact optical performance less spill light 4. Compact design 5. Feedback control and recalibrated color consistency over the device lifetime 6. Real-time lighting needs adaptability.

Therefore, it would be advantageous to have a luminaire that require no maintenance, has smoothly controllable light output in terms of intensity, spectra, spatial distribution, is robust, mass-producible as a single unit, factory sealed against the elements, is self calibrating over its lifetime, is adaptable to changing requirements, works on high or low voltage, has an affixation apparatus and is aesthetic.

FURTHER OBJECTIVES OF THE INVENTION

The objectives of the present invention are (among others) to overcome the deficiencies in the prior art and effect the following: Light is generated only when, where and in the proper amount and color that can best be used by people or is their personal preference. This will save wasted energy, money and air and light pollution while increasing visual performance and comfort. An exigency based lighting fixture is presented that provides correct illuminance in terms of chromaticity, homogeneous or aesthetic lighting generally and task lighting locally for the visual tasks at hand while preserving high visual comfort.

A number of unique illuminating device embodiments are achievable using the basic elements presented above. A few examples presented in the disclosure include: (1) an industrial lighting fixture for use in chemical and process plants where lighting that normally spills out of the existing structure as wasted light, is not produced to begin with; (2) a bedroom luminaire where normal activity and night-light lighting levels are provided as well as the ability to provide individualized lighting to each person; (3) Living room lighting with provision of modes for typical uses such as television viewing, reading with the provision of radiant spot heating based on the users unique location and usage at that instant in time; (4) A therapeutic luminaire designed to use illumination and irradiation on persons to alter biological disorders or schedule sleep or awakening; (5) a luminaire for emergency and security forces having a non-readiness situation intensity and chromacity and second high-readiness situation setting of a unique intensity and/or chromacity, where the unique chromacity does not damage the biological visual purple pigment of the retina that is responsible for enabling night vision. It thus eliminates the time these security forces would need to adjust from normal lighting to low-light night vision conditions; (6) a restaurant luminaire which illuminates foods and/or people in their best light while providing for the correct level and chromacity of ambient lighting for generating the optimal dining atmosphere; (7) A general luminaire which the end user configures themselves in situ to best suit their desired lighting preferences. The field adjusted luminaire comes with the lighting elements and their power supplies but the user re-arranges in particular directions and sets their light output levels and/or chromacity to obtain the preferred output; (8) A do it yourself modular lighting system which is intuitive

capable of receiving light sources over its surface where the user chooses the light source with its chromacity and intensity level. The user builds up the light distribution pattern on their own and connects the sources to the integral modular power supply; (9) A single light engine device for a room or outdoor location with concentrated light output capable of being beamed distances to reflectors or refractors which redirect the light to be more optimally used in a localized area.

The overall objective of these exemplary embodiments is the disclosure of an exigency based lighting fixture that provides correct or user preferred illuminance in terms of chromaticity, homogeneity, aesthetic considerations over a general area and/or task lighting provided in a small area for the visual tasks at hand. Providing illumination only where, how and when it is needed to efficiently carry out visual tasks minimizes wasted light thus minimizing energy use for lighting. To achieve this efficiency goal there is a need for a lighting fixture having provision for 1) the differentiation over space and time of its light intensity and color 2) that can be set-up in the field and/or 3) adjusted in real-time to changing lighting requirements.

While these objectives should not be understood to limit the teachings of the present invention, in general these objectives are achieved in part or in whole by the disclosed invention that is presented in the following sections. One skilled in the art will no doubt be able to select aspects of the present invention as disclosed to affect any combination of the objectives described above.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A lighting device incorporates one or more discrete light sources and their ancillary optical and electrical control equipment in an integrated illuminating element. The overall lighting effect is the result of the combination of these multiple sources, detector and control components operating together. Preferably, the power conditioning circuitry, light sources, logic control circuitry, sensors and optical elements are packaged together in one integral device. The system contrives a lighting device which replaces the present day multi-component lighting fixtures or luminaires including: the lamp; optical light control element/s such as reflector, refractor and shade; power conditioning devices such as a ballast; control equipment such as switch, dimmer, and timer. Detectors, emitters and sensors for light intensity, spectrum, temperature etc such as photodiodes, photocells thermocouples etc are provided. These provide data input to the controller, allow feedback and enable recalibration. An additional apparatus that conducts electric power along length, as electrical wiring, may be added to the system to provide further unitization. The integral lighting element is packaged in the shape of a globe, hemisphere, disc or strip and is designed to quick connect to the electric power carrying conductors. Provision is made for mechanical affixation to a structural surface. In the present concept over the life time of the fixture there is no lamp replacement only fixture replacement. It's assumed that after 100,000 hours it is time to change the fixture.

The method of creating a luminaire adapted to the usage and surroundings in which the luminaire will be integrated is disclosed. The process includes determining: the correct lighting practice for the application; the surroundings; the selection and placement of light sources and their integration with the mechanical support and; electronic control elements to realize the objective.

The present invention also relates to lighting fixtures comprised of many directional light sources that are mounted with different aimings so as to correctly illuminate an area. The LED light sources are moveable so that they can be adjusted to best illuminate the area where the luminaire has actually been installed. In addition they may be controllable by a microprocessor as to the light intensity and color so as to best assist people to see what they are doing at that moment, be it reading a book, watching TV or assembling an automobile. The lighting fixture is equipped with a "smart" camera (similar to a cell phone's processor controlled digital camera) which inputs data on the lighting, occupants and current conditions within the room. The result of this added sophistication is that electricity is spent on generating only useful light. The energy savings greatly reduces electricity costs and environmental impact.

The present invention more specifically relates to lighting fixtures whose spatial light distribution and/or spectral power distribution is capable of being adapted, either manually or automatically, to provide the illumination needed in that specific surrounding and at that specific time. The Field Adjustable Multiple-Light-Source Luminaire, FAML, is thus a universal product that can be tailored onsite so as to provide design illuminance and color spectrum to the relevant surfaces in the specific lighting installation. Thus a preferred embodiment of the invention is a lighting fixture comprised of many light sources which can be separately aimed and powered so as to illuminate areas or objects in a room or outdoors in a most correct, efficient and comfortable manner.

To affect this directional lighting versatility, in a preferred embodiment the luminaire is comprised of many directional light sources that can be re-positioned so as to illuminate in different directions. The light sources at a particular aiming may all be one color, say white or may be of different colors which when combined together yield a different colored light beam. Altering the radiated power of one color light source versus the other allows for the creation of light in a myriad of colors. The luminaire has some light sources at the same aiming and others at different aimings and may come in a standard configuration for the general type of lighting application from the factory. Upon installation, if the factory preset lighting distribution does not fit the actual surroundings, the installer will customize the configuration by adjusting the light source aimings and light intensity output such that the correct amount of light is supplied to where it is needed while not at all or minimally illuminating areas where it is not needed. The installer will also make provision for the existence of other lighting fixture in the same or adjacent areas. When light is provided at higher angles and glare would result from the LED light source being visible, the light is not wasted by covering it with a shade or passing the light through a diffuser thereby losing the directionality and light flux due to absorption. Instead taking advantage of the small étendue of the light source, an optical spreader is used to increase the area from where the light is exiting thus lowering the luminous exitance while maintaining directionality.

To effect the provision of lighting that is in concert with the actual illumination needs at a given time, in an embodiment of the FAML, a camera serves as a sensor capable of detecting light, color and contents of the living space. The fixture is equipped with a logical controller. Using computer vision technology to recognize people, objects and surroundings the lighting fixture can provide the lighting requirements needed in the room at that moment in time. The computer vision system has been [illegible]

ferent visual tasks such as an individual operating a machine, reading a book or watching TV. The logical controller has instruction sets as to what color lighting at what intensity is preferable for that specific visual task. Thus if no one is in the room the lighting is off or a dimmed, aesthetic lighting is provided for the good feeling of those looking in. When people enter the room, immediately general room lighting is turned on and following that, specific task lighting is provided and adjusted to the right level and color based on where they are in the room and what they are doing.

An automatic embodiment of the FAML would include motion control elements for the light sources. Coupled with the camera and logical controller, the light distribution is altered automatically as required by changes in the physical surroundings, people or environment. In a similar fashion to how a preprogrammed moving head stage light follows the performer about the stage the FAML logical controller will automatically locate the person in the room and provide locally the lighting needed for the performance of visual tasks. To save energy, the rest of the room will then be illuminated at a lower, yet comfortable lighting level.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** represents a block diagram of the elements making up a Digital Lighting Fixture system.

FIG. **2**A is prior-art design and FIG. **2**B an illustration of a preferred embodiment of this invention of a retrofit LED lamp illuminator while FIG. **2**C is a side view of an embodiment of this invention using a PCB provided with standard 5 mm hole-through LEDs.

FIG. **3**A and FIG. **3**B illustrate a preferred embodiment of a decorative LED outdoor wall sconce juxtaposed with a prior-art design.

FIG. **4** is an illustration of a Surface or Railing Mounted Digital Lighting Fixture.

FIG. **5** is a Surface or Railing Mounted Distributed Digital Lighting Fixture.

FIG. **6** is an Asymmetric Light Source made of Directional Chip Facets.

FIG. **7** illustrates an application employing the Discrete Unit Step Light.

FIG. **8** illustrates an application using the LED based Distributed Step Light Fixture.

FIG. **9** is a path lighting application using an LED Stake-Top Path Light.

FIG. **10** is the Illuminating Engineering Society Preferred color Temperature vs. Intensity Correlation.

FIG. **11** depicts an integrated digital lighting fixture using discrete solid-state light source arrays deployed angularly about the geometric volume.

FIG. **12** is a universal luminaire embodiment using an adaptive digital lighting fixture which is programmed to illuminate the area as is needed.

FIGS. **13**A through **13**C depict a streetlight fixture designed according to the teachings of this invention.

FIG. **14** is a flowchart of a typical design procedure for a multi-source lighting fixture of the present disclosure.

FIG. **15** shows a multiple light-source headlamp capable of optimally carrying out the diverse illumination functions used in driving under various environmental conditions and surroundings.

FIG. **16** is an illustration of an anti-glare system using the multiple light source headlamp.

FIG. **17** a representative Electronic Power Supply Unit for Surface or Railing Mounted Luminaire.

FIG. **18**A is a perspective view of a configurable LED luminaire comprised of many light modules.

FIG. **18**B is a view of light module optical accessories.

FIG. **19** is a perspective view of a light guide.

FIG. **20**A and FIG. **20**B are perspective view of basic embodiments of the present invention.

FIG. **21** is a perspective view of a substantially linear embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **22** is a block diagram of the elements comprising the present invention.

FIG. **23** is an exemplary flow chart for a computer program run to obtain the optimal illumination.

FIG. **24** is a perspective view of a universal lighting fixture structure with means for attaching light source and sensor elements mechanically and electrically.

FIG. **25**A and FIG. **25**B shows an embodiment where the light source arrays are mounted at the end of moveable rods.

FIG. **26** is a perspective view of a lighting fixture capable of producing both a differentiated spatial light intensity distribution as well as a spatially differentiated light spectrum distribution.

FIG. **27** is a perspective view of a field adjustable multiple light source lighting fixture.

FIG. **28**A and FIG. **28**B is a perspective view of satellite light source from the side and from the front respectively.

FIG. **29** depicts an adjustable luminaire in a lighting application.

FIG. **30** is a perspective view of a luminaire with a special night-light functionality.

FIG. **31** is a perspective view of an adjustable luminaire with added irradiation functionality.

FIG. **32** is a perspective view of an industrial lighting fixture for use in hazardous locations.

FIG. **33** is a process flow chart for a computer lighting fixture design program.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The system is built around a "digital" light source. That is, the emanating lighting effect is the sum of the characteristics of a multiplicity of discretely controllable "digit" sources. The difference between the individual "digit" light sources and their summation manifests itself in the resultant light characteristic, be in its intensity, spatial intensity distribution, spectral energy content and spectral intensity distribution. All of these characteristics are also variable with time. A light source for this purpose may be electroluminescent such as a Light Emitting Diode (LED) junction, Organic Light Emitting Diode (OLED) or carbon-related field emission devices such as a nanotube-phosphor-combination, HID, fluorescent or even an incandescent source. While a one-source lamp will not have the flexibility to effect the most correct illumination characteristics, such as maintaining correct intensity and color temperature for the lighting task at hand over changing environmental conditions, two or more differentiated sources will have an increased operating range. This flexibility is useful as for example in a multi-source luminaire with spatially differentiated dimming capability used in an office lighting application. In a normal day's operation, such as in a windowed room between peak daylight and nighttime hours, the intensity and color temperature of the light varies greatly over different portions of the room. The smooth variation possible with many light sources ("digits") vs. one light source offers superior flexibility in providing the actual lighting needs. Therefore, the illuminating device may be described as a "digital" light source or as a Multiple Solid-state Light Source (MSLS).

comprising many "digits", SLSs, and essentially replaces the lamp of present-day luminaires.

As used herein, the term "light source", LED or "solid state light source" means any system that is capable of receiving an electrical signal and producing light in response to the signal. Thus, the term "light source" should be understood to include light emitting diodes of all types, light emitting polymers, semiconductor dies that produce or emanate light in response to current, organic LEDs, electroluminescent strips, and other such systems. Incandescent and discharge light sources are also included and multiples of incandescent and discharge light sources also provide a digital luminaire. In an embodiment, a "light source" may refer to a single light emitting diode package including multiple semiconductor LED dies that are individually controlled.

The term "illuminate" should be understood to refer to the production of a wavelength of radiation by an illumination source. The term "color" should be understood to refer to any wavelength of radiation within a spectrum; that is, a "color," as used herein, should be understood to encompass wavelengths not only of the visible spectrum, but also wavelengths in the infrared and ultraviolet areas of the spectrum, and in other areas of the electromagnetic spectrum.

In designing a multi-light source luminaire the minimum design criterion for intensity and spectrum differs for each application and is related to the end user who is the ultimate measuring instrument and economic consideration of the light provider. The regularity of the changes in effects is derived from the user's perception. It is generally accepted that the eye cannot discern changes in beam intensity that are smaller than a factor of two to ten and color temperature differences of 200 to 300K. Illumination intensity changes are discernable as a logarithmic function and depend on background illumination levels. For example illuminating practice allows for hallway lighting to be 20% of room lighting due to rapid eye adaptation. However the eye is very perceptive of intensity changes when comparing images such as in comparison of gray scales and thus lighting for an art lay-up room must be very even.

A further improvement is where the lamp and lighting fixture function are carried out in one device. In a typical present-day lighting fixture, a lamp with a symmetrical distribution in placed in a reflector to redirect the light, a requirement involving added cost of the reflector and performance inefficiencies. While PAR and other integral reflector lamps exist, they again have a symmetrical distribution in one of the axes and are large due to the high temperature of operation and requirement to distance reflective surfaces due to heat and large light source dimension consideration. Since the solid state or LED lamp is made of cool operating components which have a mechanical base (versus a 1000K gas discharge which is free floating) the LED allows for an integral small sized optical element near the power source. Where the terms optics or optical are mentioned herein, they refer to redirecting light rays through any of the known phenomenon including: reflection, refraction and diffraction. Typically, an LED will come packaged in an optical assembly consisting of a reflector and lens with 8° to 50° spreads being typical. A Surface Mount Device—SMD LED with no optics will still be limited to 180° due to its construction.

A power-conditioning device such as a ballast is required to operate efficient fluorescent and HID light sources but is separate there from in function and physical construction. In the MSLS the power source is electronic as is the control equipment and thus the electric power conditioning circuitry can be integrated with the light source circuitry and packaged as one on a PC board or integrated circuit manufactured in the same way of the same materials. Chip on board and chip on chip technologies are used as a packaging configuration for LED chips as well as power and logic control transistors and other components. Power transistors come packaged in plastic and so do LED junctions only that the LED package is light transmitting and can be formed into a lens. Transistors, molded in a transparent package together with LEDs, may be shielded from undesirably receiving illumination causing base photocurrent, by providing opaque "junction coat" over the transistor die, as is well known in the semiconductor industry. The packaging also lends itself to the same manufacturing methodology such as soldering elements onto a PC board. Both hole through and SMT configurations are presently available for most of the components. This combined unit of compatible, mass producible, apparatus, including the solid-state lamps, their optical assembly, electronic ballast gear and structural fixture equipment, provides a unique Digital Lighting Fixture (DLF) device.

In a preferred embodiment the DLF is provided with an onboard controller. The controller may be a computer board, embedded device, a Digital Signal Processor, etc. In general, the term "logical controller, controller or computer" can be broadly defined to encompass any device having control circuitry or a processor which executes instructions from a memory medium.

A further improvement is the reduction of all electronic and optical components to the chip level. That is, light-emitting junctions may be placed with power electronics in an integrated circuit. For example, combination GaAs LED-JFET technology may be used, the JFETs (junction FETs, acting as control devices for the LEDs. The carrier is made of materials and shaped to carry out optical and or heat transfer functions. Multiple light emitting junctions of similar or differing characteristics, a function of doping and diffusion, are placed with the control circuitry on chips. The VLSI techniques used in digital camera photodiode arrays containing millions of pixels is used to create arrays of light emitting diodes. Actually reversing the current flow on some photodiodes will cause them to emit light. This is how OLEDs were discovered. OLEDs began in the lab as photovoltaic cells until by error they were driven in reverse. Alternately other die bonding techniques are used to create chip on chip assemblies as is known in the art. Sets of chips with similar or differing characteristics may be geometrically arranged to provide a specific light distribution and color mixing. The total envelope is then a combined lamp, power supply and lighting fixture "luminaire", and is positioned within the room to be illuminated at the design height and position to give a consistent and sufficient lighting to the area under its control. Cooling is effected using natural convection or for air currents from a cooling fan or fluidic cooling using natural or forced circulation.

On the chip and die level further magnitudes of manufacturing and packaging efficiency are realized. The integration can avail itself of other more compact packaging technologies such as chip on board and chip on chip. Assemblies with conductive and non-conductive diebonding using epoxies and eutectic solders used for a variety of semiconductor die types including ASIC's, MEM's, LED's and Sensor's. These may be used on a variety of substrate materials including FR4, Alumina, Metalized Ceramic, Carbon Fiber and Chip on Flex as single die or multiple die arrays for Chip scale packaging (CSP) [illegible]

attached to the dies via Aluminum and Gold wirebonding using both wedge bonding and ball bonding. The manufacture of Multi chip modules/MCM or Chip scale packages/CSP are also possible and can be ceramic, laminate or PCB based. These assemblies can be single or multiple die assemblies with external components making it possible to manufacture all light, sensor, power and control components as a superior integrated device.

The present invention provides an illuminating device which serves as a replacement for the lamp, socket, reflector, electric power control gear, dimmer and mechanical structure of a present-day lighting fixture or luminaire. A semiconductor junction packaged integrally with light controlling components provides a Solid-State Light Source SLS and many together form an MSLS, which when combined with power conditioning, and optionally logic control, communications and affixing elements, provides a DLF. The basis of the invention is the use of a multitude of discrete light emitting sources ("digits") to generate light. The light control elements can be applied on a per junction basis or on a "white" color generating set grouping such as RGB or on a larger set which may be convenient for manufacturing or other color rendering considerations. The requirement for controllability is however, that the SLS output is definitive in relation to spectrum and spatial distribution.

The discrete light emitting elements by operating and not operating, at full power or at a fraction of, either partially or in unison, generate light with optimal intensity, spectral distribution, and spatial distribution of intensity and spectral distribution for the viewing task at hand. This is accomplished without recourse to separate (exterior to the DLF) reflectors to redirect the light, filters to alter color, shades to control glare or dimmers to control intensity. An example of light source used in a DLF would be an electroluminescent semi-conducting material an example of which is a LED. Such a source is characterized relative to a standard incandescent lamp by its small dimensions, low voltage, low current, monochromatic spectrum, high resistance to physical shock, high directionality of the light output, and at the present, relatively high cost. In addition, the intensity of the light output over a defined range is a function of the current and within limits may be varied by orders of magnitude without deleteriously affecting the efficiency or lifetime of the LED.

Although the light production of a typical 5 mm, 50 mA maximum rated, LED of between 1 to 2 lumen is much too low to be of any practical use for illumination, the combined output of a few to hundreds to thousands of LED's is quite significant. Higher current LEDs are now being introduced which operate at 350 mA and provide 20 to 30 lumen. This however, is still is highly impractical for use in lighting a room when compared to a 100 watt incandescent lamp of 1700 lumen. Based on progress to date it is expected that LEDs will reach comparative lumen per Watt efficiencies of 60 to 120 l/W as found in gaseous discharge lamps. This invention relates to technologies which are feasible at the present state of the art 1/W as well as those which will become feasible in the future.

A "light bulb" of the present invention is comprised of a multitude of LED's where each LED or group of LED's may be of the same or different wavelength, (color—where said wavelength may be mono or multi-chromatic), light output, spatial distribution and operating frequency (as when an alternating signal is used or it is multiplexed). The light from an LED or group of LED's of red color operating with an LED of blue and green color impinging on an object would appear to the viewer as "white light". By varying the number and/or light power output of a specific color LED or group of LED's relative to the others, a different intensity and color temperature of light with a "warm" or "cool" appearance may be effected. "White" LEDs can also be used in the invention alone or with other monochromatic LEDs. A white LED comprises an emitter in the blue spectrum covered with a phosphor which fluoresces in yellow such that the combined output appears white. White LEDs come in various angular light distribution patterns and color temperature variations. White LEDs can also be combined to vary intensity and spectrum. In the preferred embodiments, "white" LEDs are not used, as the use of phosphor adds unnecessary conversion inefficiencies and output degradation with time. The ability to correct for color shift over the DLF lifetime with white LEDs is limited. However, the present invention includes the use of white or other multi-spectrum light sources.

Presently the efficiency of many types of LED's (the chemical make-up of the junction differs between colors) is high relative to incandescent but low relative to discharge lamps. However, the theoretical efficiency is quite high and the inefficiencies have to do with getting the light out between the junction and heat dissipation considerations. Expressed in lumens per watt LED's may produce up to 30 lumen/W versus 100 l/W for a discharge lamp and 18 l/W for an incandescent lamp. In the preferred embodiment, a highly efficient constant current power source is used to drive the LED's where the electronic circuit is a series connection of the discrete LED light sources. The open failure of an LED or series of LEDs which would interrupt the circuit is circumvented by the use of Zener diodes, placed such that the functionality of the lamp would not be seriously affected. The constant current power source has the advantage that different LEDs, of different forward voltage drops, from different manufacturing runs or chemical composition, may be operated together. Alternately, power circuits available in the literature for driving the LEDs are used as published in technical notes by manufactures such as Agilent.

The life expectancy of an LED can be expected to be as high as 240,000 hours between failure. Due to light degradation over time average lifetime is normally rated at 100,000 hours. At best an incandescent's rated life may be 2,000 hours and that of a fluorescent, 20,000 hours. However, the LED operated in a circuit would have only the reliability of the circuit and MTBF divided by the number of series connected LED'S. A printed circuit board with the LED's alternately connected to separate circuits with redundant access to the power sources and with the use of Zener diodes every so many LED's to circumvent any failed sections could operate directly off of the 120/240V line. Any voltage AC or DC from 4V up to 480V is practical. The LED's of the hole—thru or SMT type would be soldered in place or the LED's connected leg to leg without using a PC board.

The LED's are mounted flat in rectangular patterns or in concentric circles or on or within holes situated on geometrically curved surfaces such as on a sphere or hemisphere of round, parabolic or elliptical shape according to the desired candle power distribution pattern. The LEDs can be mounted perpendicularly to the geometric fixture surfaces or at any other angle. When mounted perpendicularly the surface, geometry is dictated by the light distribution pattern and the LED photometrics. This is the generally assumed design case in this disclosure. However, any geometry is possible with the non-perpendicular mounting of the light sources. A flexible PC board is manufactured in the flat and then "origami" style cutouts are made in the rigid PCB to

be bent and shaped into the preferred form. LEDs are insertable into holes made in plastic or metal forms to secure the LEDs in the correct location at the correct aiming.

For fluorescent lamp retrofit applications, the MSLS "luminaire" would be linear with LED's mounted all around the circumference or predominantly downwards for whichever lighting effect is desired. While a fluorescent's light distribution is usually not controlled in the longitudinal direction (the reflector can't get around the long dimension of the lamp) the LED version would be spatially directed so as to give uniform light. In comparison to a fluorescent lamp, where the light is produced equally in all directions irrespective of the final distribution pattern required in the room, the DLF has the advantage of producing light directed only where it's needed. The number of SLS aimed in a specific direction at the time of manufacture is such that the proportion and angle of the light going to the ceiling and floor are calculated to produce the desired result. Louvers and reflectors are unnecessary to prevent glare or redirect the light. Up to 40% to 60% of the light produced in a fluorescent fixture goes to waste due to these considerations.

In other embodiments of a linear fluorescent replacement SLS lamp "luminaire", the position regarding the nadir (floor) of the rows of SLS are adjustable. One or more SLS strips are free to move in an arc about a long axis such that they are aimed for uplight or down light. Apparatus is provided to fix the re-positioned SLS in place. Markers along the arc can delineate the angle. Thus, the installer can adjust the amount of up-light, down-light and floor coverage in the field, (markings on the fixture would indicate standard settings) just as an adjustable reflector changes luminaire light distribution. Here again, the difference is that there are no reflector-induced inefficiencies because of operation away from the ideal design point.

A pear shaped globe "luminaire" studded with LED's projecting light outward from the surface would give both down-light and up-light with more projection surface towards the down-light side in a typical 1 to 3 recommended ratio. Most buildings, rooms or areas to be illuminated are of a rectangular shape. The LED's on the DLF are concentrated at the 90-degree intervals. This yields a more square lighting pattern to ensure equivalent lighting in all areas of the room including the corners. This is in contrast to the chronic lack of even coverage obtained from the circular light pattern of present day light bulbs or most luminaires. At best these prior-art lamps give a circular light distribution which requires overlapping to ensure complete coverage of the area with the overlap lighting levels in wasteful excess of the requirements. A position oriented MSLS lamp has a greater concentration of LED's aimed at 90° intervals so that more light energy is directed into the far-off corners of a room to give an even illumination throughout the rectangular or square shaped area. A DLF is made with square, rectangular and even rounded light distribution if the application requires.

Typically, an incandescent or HID lamp is used in conjunction with a reflector to redirect the light to obtain a desired light pattern where more of the light is directed where it is most useful. A luminaire for area lighting will have a "bat wing" candlepower light distribution pattern, which yields equal horizontal illumination on a surface as it compensates for the "inverse square law" (a function of the cosine of the angle and the distance squared from the source). Generally, such an optical assembly has efficiency less than 80% due to losses on the reflector's surfaces. The MSLS needs no reflector to redistribute the light since each discrete SLS (digital) is aimed such that the candle power intensity varies with angle as is needed to give the optimum illumination on the room work surfaces for a given mounting height. The MSLS lamp distribution is pre-designed according to typical house or office settings. Thus, there is no need for a reflector to redirect the light and its consequent inefficiencies in order to obtain a "bat wing" distribution. The present approach by LED manufacturers is to provide single high output LEDs with optics yielding a "batwing" distribution. These batwings are usually less than optimal and are circular. The "digital" approach of this invention would yield a finer control and thus a more accurate batwing, generating a more even distribution in a rectangular/square vs. circular pattern.

In a DLF it is possible to combine a task light having a very narrow "spot" beam at the correct aiming with a general area lighting "flood" beam into one fixture. The digital lighting fixture is positioned according to recommended lighting practice near a workstation and correctly oriented such that the DLF gives a wide (though still controlled, so as not to cause glare on a computer display) general illumination distribution as well as a narrow distribution aimed at the desktop for high intensity task lighting. In a preferred embodiment a positionable task lighting spotlight located on a section of the DLF can be aimed manually or by servomotor to project onto the work area.

In another example of prior art practice a table lamp for reading is provided with a shade. The shade is there to partially redirect the light onto the book and also prevent direct, glaring, rays from the lamp used for general lighting from reaching the reader's eyes. According to the present invention, instead of having a glaring lamp producing light which is then made non-glaring by a shade at a loss in excess of 50% the LF is built such the amounts of light directed downward at useful angles and the amount of light directed upward are in the correct ratio. The surface area, from which discomfort-glare causing rays exit, is designed such that the luminous exitance is within recommended UGR levels for home use. The fixture has no need for a shade to protect from glare; the glare was never produced at those angles to begin with due to proper geometric design. To get the desired luminous exitance expressed in terms of lumen per sq. meter or luminance in terms of candela per sq. meter, the light exiting the source of specific intensity at angles which normally reach the room occupant's eyes, is spread over an area such that the exiting light is non-glaring. These lighting design parameters serve as the product specification and are incorporated into the initial design. There is no need to add on components to achieve correct lighting.

In MSLS technology an antique style table lamp uses a MSLS "bulb" specifically designed for the application, there is no need for an additional shade other than for aesthetics. The shade is a decorative element which diffuses a small amount of light for the rustic effect. The small amount of light which would be directed between 70° to 150° (the glare zone) would cause as little discomfort glare as that which is obtained from a shaded incandescent lamp but without the waste. This is done by sizing the area and intensity of the light source responsible for providing light at those angles such that the luminous exitance from the surface is within acceptable non-glaring luminance values. If desired, uplight to the ceiling above the glare zone is provided with light sources projecting between 150° to 180°. To maintain the aesthetics that people are used to or for the good feeling, a shade may be placed over the "digital" table lamp. A few LEDs can be dedicated for the purpose of illuminating the shade, either by projecting thru the shade and diffusing the light or projecting the LEDs in the shade and a [illegible]

guide. Colored LEDs could make the shade look yellow, pink or blue as preferred and programmed by the user.

The dimming capability of the MSLS is quite dramatic. A typical LED of today such as an Agilent HLMP25-ED-xxxx will produce light at a tenth of a milli-Ampere and may be operated up to 50 mA. At 0.1 mA it may produce 5 milli-lumen while at 50 mA over 1000 ml. This is a hundredfold range. Another radiation output control technique is to provide pulsed power in place of constant current. LEDS are operated on DC as well as pulse power and current as well as timing in terms of duty cycle, pulse width and other signal modulations are useable by the controller to effect intensity changes.

Correct lighting doesn't only include an even light distribution and a lack of glare but a list of other factors including intensity, warmth and color rendering. Experiments have shown (IES Lighting Handbook 8th edition p. 99) a graph of preferred color temperature of light sources at various illumination levels. The graph specifies a warmer color temperature say 2,500 Kelvin for lighting levels in the 100-lux range and a cooler temperature say 3,500 for 1,000 lux. However, a typical dimming system used in a fluorescent luminaire will lower the lighting level but will not change the color temperature. A DLF of the present invention will change the balance of the different spectrum light sources in order to achieve the correct color temperature for the new lighting level. As far as dimming goes, it possible to get an instantaneous "instant on" from the SLS light source. Thus, with a built in or exterior motion detector, the DLF can be operated at emergency lighting levels, sufficient for orientation, and then immediately power up to full level when someone enters the room. Whereas a fluorescent dimmed to 50% power will give a negative return of only 10% light an LED will generally give a linear if not positive decrease in power with light reduction. Auto-dimming circuits taking sunlight into account have been touted as an energy saving technique.

In another embodiment, the electronic luminaire has a light level detector and automatically adjusts the output to the required level. If the lighting level on only one side of the room is enhanced by the sunlight, directional luminance meters, external or integral to the DLF, detect the imbalance and the controller dims only those SLS oriented to illuminate in the sunlight illuminated direction. This detailed spatial distribution intensity control is not possible with other lamp types.

The MSLS lifetime is long such that there is essentially no need for "lamp" replacement over the life of the DLF luminaire. However, power supply circuit and light source characteristics may vary over time and correct lamp color will deviate from the standard. A feedback control loop using sensors would recalibrate color based on daylight readings over the twenty-year lifetime of the fixture. Thus a photodiode with an RGB filter is calibrated under natural light conditions. Alternately, discrete wavelength or alternately stable "white", or color, LEDs which are used only for calibration or only operated in a regime where their color is known not to shift are used as the recalibration color standard. This basis serves the dimming system in its color temperature control over its lifetime. The controller is programmed over the lifetime to seek possible recalibration opportunities. These may include using daylight or other artificial light sources available when the LSLS is not producing light. The systems can determine the accuracy of this source partially by comparing it to its previous factory or onsite calibration. Time of day analysis and initial small deviations would allow the system to evaluate whether the source was a reliable standard to use over its lifetime to correct for component color shift.

To ensure higher reliability the MSLS in the preferred embodiment will make use of large-scale integrated circuit technology where the LED junctions, Zeners and other elements are interconnected on, a chip. The chips then mounted into plane surfaces which are flat, rounded or X-hedrons.

The MSLS lifetime is long such that there is essentially no need for "lamp" replacement over the life of the DLF. This requires that the designs of the other electronic components are similarly reliable. The fixture mechanical design is again a significant departure from prior art. The fixture is sealed for life. There are no openings, gaskets, and sockets and there is no need for a mechanism to open the luminaire. All the components can be encapsulated for life to prevent water and dust ingress and thus provide a reliable, maintenance free, weatherproof and hazardous location ready lighting fixture.

The small dimensions of the light sources makes them ideal for use in conjunction with fiber optic light transmission systems. One of the primary requirements of such systems is the ability to collect the generated light into the narrow fibers. The excellent controllability of the light beam and the small source size allows for the generation of high-power narrow non-dispersing beams as would be used in flashlight, searchlight and beacons.

Multiplexing of the lamps is possible for power and lighting effect considerations. Slower duty cycles will reduce energy consumption, increase lifetime and would be used in a number of applications. Aircraft warning beacons which flash is an application, as the on-off cycling of an LED is not harmful to lamp life as it is to an incandescent lamp. Disco lighting-effect lamps are another flashing application. Dimming as well as illumination color can be carried out with both the duty cycle and current being altered.

In summary, as opposed to LED industry trends of going with a single large source, the present invention provides multiple smaller sized sources of differing characteristics such that their combined effect is greater than that which could have been offered by sum of the individual parts operating separately. The added controllability offered by breaking the total light output up into discrete specifically aimable and dimmable elements, "digits", which can be addressed by control electronics to effect intensity, spectrum and distribution, yields a lighting fixture (vs. lamp) of unparalleled performance.

In order to better understand the embodiments and methods of this invention reference is now made to the following figures.

FIG. **1** is a block diagram of the elements which in combination provide a digital lighting fixture (DLF). The DLF serves as a complete luminaire solution including: power conditioning circuitry, control electronics, sensors, mechanical fixture and light source. The DLF replaces the lighting fixture, ballast, socket, lamp, dimmers, reflector, gaskets and fasteners with a sealed for life electronic assembly. An electric power source **1**, supplies power at line Voltage 110 to 480V or at low Voltage 12-24 Volt to the DLF **2**. The DLF includes more than one light source **3**, which is preferably an electroluminescent solid-state light source but may be any other light source, such as incandescent, high intensity discharge, fluorescent, etc such that the individual characteristics of each lamp's light are combined in operation to achieve a sum of the characteristics presenting a benefit not achievable from a single source alone. The light sources are affixed or contained within a mechanical device

4, which may serve as containment to all of the components and facilitates affixation to building surfaces. The electric power is received in the correct waveform, voltage and current from the power source **1**, or is conditioned within the DLF **2**, by power conditioning elements and circuitry **5**. The direction of light exiting from the DLF as a whole or from each SLS individually is controllable by optical elements **6**, such as reflective surfaces and or refractors, and may be electronically variable optical elements.

The separate light sources may be of the same color and intensity characteristic or may have different color and intensity characteristics. Thus for a 3-stage light bulb equivalent, each of three sources can have the same lumen rating or two sources are used where one is twice the output of the other. In a finely variable, digital embodiment the effect of continuous dimming effect is achieved when the differences in the lighting level is imperceptible to the people in the room. Typically a 5% change will not be perceived. Thus with twenty equivalent intensity LEDs as a base (one additional would add less than 5%), additional quanta could be smoothly added, or on the other hand, to in reality perform perceptible dimming (which is the objective) a greater than 5% change should be effected. The same is true for the final spectral color of the light emanating from the DLF to illuminate objects. The eye adds the radiation reaching the eye and cannot perceive the separate components, contrary to the ear's recognition of sounds where each frequency is individually resolved. Therefore, quanta of specific spectral color energy may be added to the mix without perception. For example changes up to 200 degrees Kelvin in HID lamps are not perceived. Thus to effect a noticeable color change, a quanta of spectral color power would need to be added or detracted from the sum.

In a preferred embodiment the DLF contains logic control electronics unit **7**. Logic control electronics unit, **7**, receives input and/or feedback from motion, intensity and/or spectral sensors **8**, or from manual control button **9** and increases or decreases or turns on or shuts off the power to one or more of the SLS to effect the desired change. That is, the control logic unit **7** has stored parameters for intensity and spectral distribution and operates the MSLS lamp within the predefined range. The control unit may include a DSP or computer with storage media, computer algorithms, signal input and output electronics, analog to digital converters, and communications elements to carry out intensity, distribution, dimming and color balance control. Computer algorithms and instruction sets **7A** are induced by the logical controller to manipulate data, calculate results generate output signals and maintain the operating parameters within the specifications. Measured parameters are checked against the stored parameters and the control circuitry adjusts the power to SLS.

Sensors **8** include any of the following: light, temperature and motion detection devices. Two types of optical detection sensors may be used: A photo detector with specific spectral sensitivity to detect a specific color. For example a standard red, blue and green set which would then indicate how "white" the light is. Alternately, a wide spectrum photo detector that irrespective of color measures the intensity of each excited die as it is test fired, based on the eye visual sensitivity curve. The optical sensor may be lensed and capable of forming an image, that is a camera and the detector may be a detector array of photodiode pixels. The detector array may be a CMOS or CCD VSLI array and may be monochromatic or color as in a monochromatic or digital camera. Such arrays are readily available in mega-pixel resolution.

With changes in ambient lighting the light sensors detecting conditions at a specific location receive input. The detector instantaneously reads the ambient during a momentary shut off the artificial light source. The momentary shutoff is of short duration, e.g., less than one millisecond duration, at rates undetectable to the users as the eye does not discern flicker rates above 1/100th of a second. The controller then readjusts the driving circuitry to the correct power level. The sampling of multiple sensors around the DLF can be simultaneous using buffers in the controller to facilitate analysis by methods known in the art. Alternately, the light sources and coordinated detectors at specific locations are turned off, sampled, turned on again and sampled, to verify that the illumination is within recommended specifications. Interaction between DLFs, located in close proximity to each other, is avoided, by the use of the short-duration momentary shutoff controller readjusting time interval. The probability of simultaneous controller readjustment of two adjacent DLFs is very small. Further, the timer which controls the time between the controller readjusting time intervals, is preferably analog, such that there is very low probability of two DLFs having the same time between controller readjusting intervals.

In a system with feedback, changes in the light source output reflected back to the lamp such as color shift and diminishing flux over time can be compensated for. A typical fluorescent or HID source will experience serious color shift over its 10,000 to 20,000 hour lifetime. It would be a significant advantage to have a 100,000 hour life lamp with color accuracy over the complete lifetime of the lamp.

In a preferred embodiment a re-calibration system will operate as follows. The DLF is provided with a reflective rod or strip the surface of which has a wide spectrum, non-angle of incidence dependency and stable reflection characteristics over time. The reflective rod or strip is positionable so that the rod or strip can reflect light back to the outward facing photodetector based on the DLF body. In another embodiment the DLF is provided with a calibration wand on which inward facing photodetectors are placed. The calibration wand is capable being positioned such that the detectors can detect SLS performance. Both the reflective rod/strip and calibration wand can be narrow such that they can be permanently deployed about the DLF and not block light. In another embodiment the rod, strip or wand is stored and is only deployed when calibration is required. When called upon, the rod, strip or wand is rotated around the DLF to read SLS intensities. Alternately, the DLF body rotates and the rod, strip or wand remains fixed. The DLF is originally calibrated in the factory using external detectors. The spectral output of each SLS is calibrated with the power supply controller over the range of power outputs and the characteristics are stored in a memory device for recall during operation. The calibration wand or reflective rod or strip is then used by the DLF in an internal calibration where the DLF detector's readings at the initial SLS power settings are recorded. These readings become the standard for future calibrations, where the controller will affect the power to individual junctions such that proper intensity and color is produced.

The DLF has a clock unit and/or a communication unit capable of receiving signals from the US government operated "atomic clock" which is located in Colorado. The DLF automatically searches for the signal or once a day it automatically recalibrates its time. On a periodic basis after degradation is assumed to be significant, the controller **7** invokes the calibration routine.

In another preferred embodiment the DLF surroundings are used for calibration in place of the calibration strip. A short time following installation, (after the furniture and decor has settled down), an onsite calibration is scheduled and run at the first opportunity. The purpose of this on-site calibration is to have the controller check the spectral characteristics of the illuminated area. A specific die on an SLS is fired on a timed basis and the controller reads the photo detector value. The new site-specific reading is then taken and compared to the original calibration and stored. The site-specific reading will serve as the base for the next calibration, as it is assumed to render the surroundings correctly based on still calibrated light sources. The next calibration may be scheduled for night and holidays to ensure a date when dark conditions prevail. If darkness cannot be ensured, the incremental shift in intensity above the ambient can be measured. Photo diode detectors of known field of view are placed on the DLF such that SLS output is detected. In lights out conditions of darkness the controller takes a base reading sample of a detector. The base reading allows the subtraction of "noise" from further readings. During the calibration the base reading may be repeated to ensure accuracy. Periodically, possibly every half a year, more or less depending on manufacturer data of how much the LEDs drift from their initial performance, a calibration routine is run. If a change in decor has been made, then the drastic change will signal the logic controller to ignore the latest reading and use the present "white" setting to recalibrate the new decor. Although photodetectors are stable devices, over a 30 year DLF lifetime it may be necessary to calibrate the photodetectors as well. Absolute intensity readings can only be recalibrated against a laboratory standard. However, daylight may be used to recalibrate color sensitive photodetectors over the 20-year lifetime. At the post installation calibration session a day reading of photodetectors is performed and the readings analyzed for daylight sources. This is done using the clock where daylight will show a predicable spectral shift over the hours of the day. The controller will then compare the readouts of detectors over the day to identify those exposed to daylight. First during the day readings of the photodetectors are taken.

The detectors facing the daylight are assumed calibrated to read "white light. In darkness SLS units, SLS **1** in view of one calibrated daylight facing detector, detector **1** and one uncalibrated detector, detector **2**, are powered to produce white light as determined by the calibrated detector. Now detector **2** is calibrated. Moving stepwise around the DLF the process is repeated with now calibrated detector **2** used to adjust SLS **2** located between detector **2** and not yet calibrated detector **3** to produce "white" light. SLS **2**'s output is then used to calibrate detector **3**. The process continues around the DLF till other daylight-calibrated detectors are reached. For greater accuracy the process can then be performed in the other direction, moving stepwise until detector **1** is reached again. By using this nodal analysis method discrepancies propagated in the calibration process are reduced.

A power guide **10** can serve as both a power distribution and mechanical affixation device to the placement of additional DLF units **11** within an expanse. Light output **12** from one DLF may differ in distribution from another 13, if say one MSLS is in the center of a room and the other is at the edge or one light illuminates steps between the landings and another is the last step before the landing, the last step would be illuminated in a different color.

Since an LED device is operable over a wide range of currents, when an LED serves as the light source, dimming and color balance are smoothly and infinitesimally variable.

For the purpose of illustration, a preferred embodiment of the present invention is presented in FIG. **2**B juxtaposed with a prior art solution using LEDs shown in FIG. **2**A. A typical "bulb" shape with a screw in base is provided for retrofit locations where a socket is available. The prior art design depicts LEDs spread out on the surface of what looks like a reflector lamp. It is evident from the downward facing 5 mm hole-thru type LEDs—14 that no attempt has been made to extract a "batwing" or any other effective type of light distribution pattern. Upward facing LEDs—15 seem intended for uplighting and again it is clear from the symmetry that no attempt has been made to provide a rectangular pattern which will give a better use of light for indirect lighting.

FIG. **2**B illustrates the teachings of the present invention. In this case, although packaged to appear as a typical "A" shaped light bulb, the device is actually a DLF and provides a complete lighting solution. Although shaped like a lamp with a screw base to facilitate replacement when the "lamp" burns out, this is not necessarily the intent. Rather, in the present concept, after 100,000 hours (over 30 years in typical use) it's time to refurbish the room and change the fixture. The outward design is thus generated by what people expect to purchase and not what a DLF, that is not a lamp should look like. A true DLF design would not include the ceiling mounted socket and would be provided with a wiring connector and accoutrements and fasteners for attachment directly to the ceiling.

A retrofit MSLS lamp or digital lighting fixture/luminaire **16** intended to replace the lamp, fixture, reflector or shade and control-gear combination of a typical lighting fixture, includes a screw base **17**, which receives line power **18** into the electronic power conditioning circuitry **19**. In a preferred embodiment, control circuitry **20** is provided in the lamp. The input to the control is from an external source or internal logic circuit or both and in a preferred embodiment a sensor pack **21** with one or more radiation and communication sensors capable of detecting motion, day/night, spectrum, luminance etc is provided. In external control, a control signal **22** rides on the power signal **18** and enters via the screw base **17** or an infrared or other radiation detector provided in **21** picks up the control signal. Discrete packaged light sources, e.g. Solid-state Light Source SLS **23** containing one or more junctions are mounted on the DLF lighting fixture body **24** and connected to the controlled power circuitry that determines which of the SLS **23** will operate and at what power. Each SLS with it spectral and distribution characteristic is mounted in a specific location on the surface of the DLF with an angle α, **25** from the nadir. Any angle from the nadir is possible including 180 degrees and the light flux can serve to provide uplight or illuminate a picture on a wall.

In a position oriented lamp arrangement, that is where the socket has a distinct stop point, detent or pin and is mounted substantially oriented to the room or its contents such as a work desk or wall painting, and also the DLF has a specific mounting orientation relative to the socket, then the light distribution can be nonsymmetrical and tailored to the needs of the room. The screw base **17** has a detent or pin **26** that coincides with the stop point on the socket, which is mounted in a specific location radially around the lamp at an angle β, **27** in reference to pin **26** and a design start point on the circumference of body **24**. The SLS are placed at an angle β horizontally and vertically around the luminaire

specific areas and also have their own spatial light distribution angle θ1 **28**A. An SLS aimed to illuminate an interior area may have a wide distribution or a distribution without a sharp cutoff **28**A while those SLS located at the edge of the area to be illuminated may be of narrow distribution θ2 **28**B and have a sharp cutoff. This technique is similar to how a sport playing field is illuminated with multiple floodlights. Floodlights of narrow beam spreads such as a NEMA **2** are used to illuminate at the edge of the illuminated area while wider NEMA **4** beam spreads are used near the center of the playing area. The MSLS lamp will have concentrations of SLS at specific aimings to provide a wide "flood" type distribution to one part of the room and a "spot" type distribution to another such as to a painting on the wall. Each illumination target is at a different light intensity and color temperature or color rendering.

In another embodiment SLS, which perform an equivalent to a task light function with a very narrow beam, are combined with SLS performing a general background lighting function in one fixture. While general lighting recommendations in an office call for the provision of 300 to 500 lux over the working plane, specific task lighting, for example where copy work is to be illuminated by auxiliary lighting, 1,000 lux is required. To this end a section **29**, containing SLS on the DLF, provides a narrow beam of higher intensity, to provide added light flux to the working surface. In an alternate embodiment section **29** on the DLF is on a swivel and can be manually adjusted to be aimed at the worktable. In an alternate embodiment the swivel is positioned by a servomotor and controlled by a remote control unit. In an alternate embodiment to the fixed task light section **29**, in an attempt to cut down on separate fixture types with left or right handed spot or other asymmetric orientations, the MSLS portion of the DLF body **24** is rotatable in relation to the affixing base **17**. Such an embodiment also obviates the need for a position oriented socket and base pin **26**.

In another embodiment, modulating the output of wide distribution and narrow distribution LEDs by the controller varies the net resultant beam spread characteristics. The fixture is placed near a workstation and gives a wide distribution general lighting as well as a narrow high intensity beam for increased illumination level task lighting on demand.

In order to assure an even distribution of light from a point source over an area, it is necessary to take the effects of the angle and distance to the illuminated surfaces into account as stated in the inverse square law. Often a "batwing" type of candlepower light distribution is used. In a prior art luminaries the reflector, which concentrates reflected rays in the higher angles, accomplishes this. In a preferred embodiment of the MSLS there are more, or more powerful, SLS over a range 1 aimed at higher angles to increase light flux at those angles in order to maintain an even light distribution. If the lamp is specifically oriented in relation to the room concentrating more light into the distant corners effects a squared distribution pattern, which would fill in the corners of a square room with equivalent illumination. An added amount of SLS are added on the DLF body **24** at 90 degree angles on β, **27** where SLS aimings will push added light into areas corresponding to the "corners". To effect uplight towards the ceiling or for indirect lighting SLS **23**A are aimed towards the ceiling such that an optimal utilization of the light is achieved.

In the preferred embodiment color of light emanating from an SLS **23** is "white" light. This is accomplished by using a "white" light producing arrangement of LEDs that is comprised of two or more spectrally differentiated junctions, which then combine their light output such that the illuminating light appears white. Other white LED technologies use phosphor or other coatings over the junction which causes a shift to longer wavelengths. The separate junctions in an SLS or separate SLS may be independently controlled. In a multi junction SLS the total color of the illumination may be shifted to "warm" or "cool" light in correct accordance with the illumination level (see FIG. **10**) or other considerations. In another preferred embodiment, a motion detector is used to conserve energy. The room lamp is dimmable to a lighting level sufficient for safe orientation. A motion sensor **21** picks up activity and increases the illumination level to meet the activity level. This integral placement significantly reduces the wiring from sensor to power supply and again back to lamp in prior-art dimmer—motion sensor applications.

In alternate embodiment each SLS **23** may have a non-white color. The operation of many SLS in unison of different or similar wavelength may be used to create any color desired from white to monochrome in any specific region to be illuminated. A spectrum sensor **21** inputs data to controller **20**, which maintains color at predefined level. Such a feedback mode allows for the MSLS to maintain constant color over the full lifetime of the lamp even if specific wavelength SLS shift output characteristics such as light flux and spectrum with age within bounds of the sensors calibration over age. Constant color is maintained in a room with an influx of a less desirable color temperature light on one side. Spectrum sensor **21** with a specific orientation would detect a "cool" light reflection emanating from a specific side of the lamp and will increase "warm" e.g. 2000K light to compensate. Over the long lifetime the DLF could recalibrate its spectral sensors **21** to white light based on readings of daylight where such daylight is available and the controller has determined that the room at the time of calibration is being illuminated with white light "daylight" of a specific color temperature per orientation and time of day.

The same light distribution effect based on light source aimings could have been accomplished as in the prior-art, easy to manufacture flat pc-board configuration by simply angling the LEDs **23**B from the perpendicular as shown in FIG. **2**C. Shown is a side view of a PCB provided with standard 5 mm hole-through LEDs. The LEDs are produced with standoffs on the legs such that after soldering automatic machinery can bend the legs so that the LEDs project at the required angle from the nadir to achieve the required photometric pattern. Lead bending as is known in the art also allows for uplight as with LED **23**C. Though not as elegant as DLF **16**, this easy to manufacture configuration will accomplish much of the sought after light distribution.

FIG. **3**A is an illustration of a prior art wall sconce for outdoor use displayed by a leading LED manufacture in at a lighting trade show in 2003. It is juxtaposed with FIG. **3**B to highlight the difference in the design methodology as taught buy this invention. The very aesthetic prior-art wall sconce fixture encased in a curved decorative frame is portrayed in top, front and side views. It uses a multiplicity LED light sources to shine through a diffuser to produce an even glow. "White" LEDs **31** were placed on a flat printed circuit board **32** and the light was dispersed via a white diffuser **33** with the light exiting lambertianally in all directions. The good optical control initially present on the LED **31** is now squandered on the prior-art diffuser in an attempt to prevent glare from the pinpoint LED source and produce a pleasant glow on the diffuser. Light is projected evenly in

all directions including uselessly upward, where it will help drown out starlight. The prior art flat PCB and optional metal heat sink **32**B facilitates manufacture and heat transfer and that is probably why the design is the way it is, with production feasibility considerations driving the design, rather than correct energy saving lighting principles.

FIG. **3**B illustrates how the same improved lighting design process can be accomplished for an outdoor wall sconce DLF intended to illuminate a walkway at night. According to the teachings of this invention, the LEDs **31**, power supply and other electrical components **34** are assembled on strips of semi-flexible printed circuit boards **35**. The LEDs can be multi-colored or monochromatic LEDs with overlapping coverage or white LEDs. As illustrated in the top view of FIG. **3**B, the LEDs **31** are mounted on a convex surface **35** such that some face to the left, some right and a smaller quantity towards the middle. The middle aimings require fewer light sources due to the inverse square and cosine law for a point source as is this DLF, where light at the angle of illumination of 0 degrees is more intense than for light at an angle greater than zero and a point closer to the DLF is more intense by the square of the distance in the denominator. The exact solution for the aimings is such that for a desired coverage and illumination level the illuminance equation 1 is used to calculate the necessary light intensity in candela at each aiming angle. The side view shows the LEDs **31**A and **31**B with varied downward angles, such that even illumination is produced on the walkway out to the prescribed distance from the wall. The PCB strips are optionally affixed onto a curved and angled aluminum heat sink **36** with electrically insulative but thermally conductive adhesive such as Dow Corning® SE 4400 Thermally Conductive Adhesive.

The diffuser **37**, is shown in the side section view to have white diffusing sections **38** and clear, fully transmissive slots **39**. The controlled angular distribution light emanating from the LEDs **31** passes through the clear slots **39** and illuminated the walkway. The diffuser **37** is illuminated by stray light emanating beyond the controlled angle of the LED **31** or one or more LEDs can be dedicated to the task and aimed into the diffuser material, using it as a light guide to spread the light within the diffuser as is practiced in the art.

FIG. **3**B illustrates how the same end result as the prior art fixture FIG. **3**A, of having a pleasantly illuminated diffuser can be accomplished while not compromising on the energy efficiency and correct lighting output of the luminaire. The fixture aesthetics can be maintained while a more physically compact design can be carried out. The components depicted in FIG. **3**B are possibly more complex and thus initially more costly. However in a comparison of the life cycle cost per effective lux, which includes the electricity charges over the life of the fixture, the DLF is certainly superior to the prior-art.

The above design depicted in FIG. **3**B is easily adapted to a hallway application where some light to the ceiling is beneficial. To provide up light a row of LEDs **31**A is aimed towards the ceiling instead of downwards.

FIG. **4** illustrate additional embodiments of a DLF which may take on any shape be it disc shaped or linear depending on the aesthetic choice of the designer and the lighting application at hand. Thus, a preferred luminaire configuration for lighting an area from within, (using a number of lighting fixtures to prevent shadows) would be a concentrated point source design. To illuminate from the perimeter of the room or along a walkway, a linear configuration luminaire or many distributed point source luminaires are optimal. In FIG. **4** a disc shaped containment **40** would contain SLS **41** where again, the radial position of each SLS and the aiming is such as to yield a specified lighting pattern on the surfaces to be illuminated therefrom. A smooth light distribution is achieved by aiming relatively more SLS **42** in the direction of the more distant (or less perpendicular) surfaces or objects to be illuminated. One or more sensors such as motion, day/night, spectrum, luminance, are provided for in **43** or any other location as is required. A printed circuit board with power and control circuitry is provided for **44**, as are screws **45** and or adhesive on the rear **46** for affixing to a surface. Electrical connection is made via a connector or sharp prongs to a conductor **47** which are pressed against the conductors to make electrical contact. The total assembly **48** with its light sources at specific positions and aimings, its power conditioning and control equipment and connection to power source, be it integral such as with on board batteries, or external from a power line constitutes a complete lighting fixture replacement element.

Based on the disc or puck shaped integrated luminaire above an application featuring a snap on Step Light **66** used outdoors is illustrated. One or more SLS **50** are contained in housing **51** which is substantially transparent in the area in front of the SLS. The SLS light source is very long lived therefore the unit is sealed watertight for life in the injection molding process or via glue. The SLS **50** are aimed so that the distribution pattern, at standard mounting height, effectively illuminates the steps. In one embodiment the luminaire is provided in two models each specific to a right side and left side installation with opposite aimings in order to yield an even distribution along either the receding or proceeding stairs.

A two-conductor cable, which conducts power **52**, is installed along a building surface or railing along the area to be illuminated. A bracket **53** is attached to the wall **64** on which the light puck is to be placed. The slot **54** atop the puck is inserted under the top clip **55** of bracket **53**. The puck is hinged down and the bottom pivoted, catch lever **56** enters within the void of bottom clip **57**. The screw **58**, which can be a tamperproof screw to prevent removal by vandals, is tightened forcing the protruding leg of top-heavy catch lever **56** to fill the void in the bottom clip **57** of bracket **53** and lock the light puck in place. At the time of tightening screw **58** pushes contact block **59** with conductive piercing prong **60** against power cable **52**. Conductive prong **60** pieces outer insulation layer **61** of power cable **52** and makes contact with electrical conductor **62**. Further tightening of the screw **58** forces the prong on the opposite contact block **63** to pierce through the insulating layer and make electrical contact. A power cable **52** conducting current at low voltage, say 24 Volt, may be directly affixed to the wall **64** without enclosure in a conduit, and the light puck attached at points along the power cable. A bracket or clip **53** is used to affix the lighting puck fixture to the wall and has an opening **65** for the contact blocks **59** and **63** to fit through. The fixture **66** may be sealed for life during manufacture since there are no serviceable parts inside for the lifetime of the electronic components.

Other applications include stairwell lighting that is activated by motion detector or is always on due to the low power consumption or a combination of constant low level on state, with the increase to full power based on activity. Distributed along a power strip running along the stairwell are disc shaped DLF units such as luminaire **66**. A motion detector **67** in the first and last units between the floor landings is used to turn on the lamps ahead of the person using the stairs. An outdoor solar energy step light application will use a photocell or any other [illegible] turn the

system on at night and a motion detector to turn the lights on for a short duration after motion is detected thus reducing the amount of energy needed to be collected in solar cells. Instead of being in a totally off state, the lighting can be partially on, such that it is visible in order to give definition to the landscape and help in orientation. This power usage is very low since even at very low current LEDs are visible at night. Upon being initiated by the motion detector it can go to full power to illuminate obstacles in the path.

Last Step or first step could be indicated by a different color of light. A motion detector could accordingly change the MSLS output color if the individual is approaching the steps say to green and to amber or red when reaching the last step.

FIG. **5** illustrates another DLF embodiment, a linear lighting fixture **70** where the similar or different SLS **71** and **72** are distributed along the area to be illuminated such as is typical with fluorescent lighting fixtures used in soffit lighting. The system may have a power conducting strip of a similar shape **73** which connects to lighting strip **70** via receptacle **74** and pin **75** set and which are attached to conductor set **76**. The two strip types, the lighting fixture strip and the power conducting strip may be adjoined together or affixed directly to the wall or attached to bracket **77** which may slide into a slot **78** in **70** and **73** and where there may also be provided matching cutouts in the lighting fixture and bracket. The matching cutouts **79** allow for a quicker, straight on insertion before sliding horizontally in the slot **78**. The bracket is thus first attached to the wall and the strips are brought up to the bracket and moved sideways to latch.

Many lengths of strips **70** or **73** up to the power capacity of the conductors can be joined together and connected to a power source with a connector **80**. Interchangeable sections of the power strip can contain LEDs of different colors for effects or alternate between power strips and lighting strips for a similar aesthetic architectural design.

The lighting/power strip may be thin and linear substantially in one or two planes or for aesthetic considerations have curves or be constructed of a flexible material and have the ability to be manipulated into curves and bends in three planes, to make such designs as an arc, wave or circle. The electrical conductors may provide the malleability to shape the strip and then hold the configuration after it is bent up, for example if they are made of copper or aluminum or alternately an additional bendable, yet shape-retaining material may be inserted in the casing **81** or the casing material itself may have such properties.

The Lighting strip **70** and Power strip **73** may also conduct light and radiate light to give a lighting effect all along its length. Alternately, the strips may be a light conductor with little light exitance from the surface and the total internal reflection is selectively frustrated to let light out along the length in a specific direction or at desired intervals. The strip lighting may come from SLS specifically aimed to project light into the strip or from light leakage from regularly placed optimally (per the main lighting application) aimed LEDs.

Another embodiment of a solid-state lighting fixture, DLF or luminaire is shown in FIG. **6**. Whereas previously described luminaires were described as incorporating LEDs in standard hole-through or SMD packages, here, a luminaire using the unpackaged solid-state light source junction is described. A multifaceted luminaire **90** is comprised of any of the following list including a mechanical affixing method to a surface **91**, an electrical connection to an outside power source **92**, and a mechanical frame **93** to hold the one or more light sources **98** or lighting facets **94**. Power conditioning, heat rejection and control elements are contained on or within the interior of the structure **93**. A number of light sources, facet or many facets are placed in position radially around the lamp and angled vertically to effect the desired light distribution. Thus while facet **94** is positioned in the frame **93** radially and angled so as to be aimed substantially downward to the left of the fixture position, facet **95** is positioned and angled to illuminate an area further out and to the right.

A detail of a lighting chip or facet is shown in front view **96** and side view **97**. In the first embodiment P/N junctions **98** of light emitting semiconductor material are placed on a thermal conducting and or light-reflecting surface **99**. Electrical connection **100** is made between the junctions often referred to in the industry as dies, such that different color junctions may be located in close proximity to each other and their combined light spectrum yielding the desired color. The power and control circuitry have access to each individual die, a cluster of dies or to a total facet. This allows for the dimming and color temperature adjustment of the illumination. To more tightly control the light intensity distribution the surface **101** beneath the light-emitting junction is formed concave to reflect and concentrate the radiation into a narrow beam. Alternately, or if additional optical control is needed, the top layer of the junction **102**, if it is light transmitting, is formed to act as a lens such as a Fresnel lens or a surface **103** above the die serves as a lens.

The level of miniaturization is irrelevant. The principal is the method of powering and controlling the light source intensity directionality and color spectrum in one integral unit by varying power signal to specifically positioned light sources of specific spectral power distribution. Device **90** contains for this purpose any or all of the following: unit **104** for effecting the power conditioning of electric current supplied to the light emitting elements, a control unit **105** to vary power to specific junctions or chips and sensor units **106** to provide input and feedback to the control elements as described earlier in devices **2** and **14**. The earlier described DLFs of FIGS. **1** through **5** are also designable using the facet light source building blocks.

In an LED, light is produced at the p-n junction of the diode. It is known that one of the major losses of light output from solid-state lamps is the absorption of light within the epitaxial layer of the chip. On a submicron level, other inefficiencies derive from defects caused by the lattice mismatch. Often LEDs are producing light at a quantum efficiency of approximately 5 percent. Depending on the chemistry and the junction molecular geometry a specific thickness of light emitting layer is required. Also the width of the junction is important as light is absorbed in the interior.

Light extraction from AlGaInN-based LEDs is limited by the various parasitic optical loss mechanisms present within or surrounding the AlGaInN epitaxial layers. These mechanisms include absorption at the semi-transparent metallic layer as well as absorption within many layers comprising the epitaxial portion of the LED, such as the buffer layer the active region and the heavily Mg-doped GaN contact layer. Because of the refractive index step between the multilayered epitaxial structure (n=2.4) and the sapphire substrate (n=1.77) or the encapsulation epoxy layer (n=1.5), only approximately 25% of the light generated within the active region escapes into the epoxy or the substrate upon first encountering these interfaces. The rest of the light is trapped in a waveguide formed by the encapsulation epoxy layer above the chip and the substrate. The trapped light may

travel distances on the order of the length of the chip to escape from the sides of the LED. Such distances require many passes through the various loss mechanisms within the LED structure, increasing the probability of absorption. Thus, much of this trapped light is eventually lost, decreasing the overall light output of the LED.

The LED is designed to allow the light produced to escape through an end face. However not all of the light is able to escape a diode in air because a portion is totally internally reflected at the interface between the diode and surrounding air. Due to the very high refractive index of most semiconductor materials, the portion of the light totally internally reflected is very large.

Therefore contrary to the present trend in high flux LED design of building very large, high current diodes, it would be advantageous to build a multitude of very small diodes with relatively large surface areas relative to volume and lessen these losses.

The layout of the facet in FIG. **6** is applicable to a submicron-sized dice **102** with nano wires **107** and other subminiature connectors **108** bringing power to the junction. To prevent absorption of light by the neighboring junction the cusped reflective structure **101** of the lower surface surrounds the lower hemisphere of the junction.

The reflector as mentioned earlier for the dice on the micron level may be similar to the one described in "Semiconductor light emitter" U.S. Pat. No. 5,537,433 by Watanabe, where a semiconductor light emitter, such as the light-emitting diode or the semiconductor laser, having a structure in which a light emitting area or an active layer; a transparent layer which is pervious to light radiated from the light emitting area or the active layer; and an opaque layer or an opaque substrate which is impervious to the radiated light are arranged in order or in the inverse order. The semiconductor light emitter includes (a) total reflection layer(s) arranged between the transparent layer(s) and the opaque layer(s) so as to come into contact with the transparent layer. The refractive index of the total reflection layer is smaller than that of the transparent layer. Therefore, at least one part of the light, which has been radiated from the light emitting area or the active layer and which has been reflected by the total reflection layer thereafter, is either radiated outward from side surfaces of the transparent layer or returned to the active layer.

To carry away heat from the electronic components, a hollow center **109** will act as a thermal chimney and components are mounted on heat sinks. In compact applications, a fan or pump **110** is used in forced circulation cooling. In alternate preferred embodiment, a highly optically transmissive cooling fluid, **111** surround the chips, junctions or facets **94**. The fluid absorbs waste heat and circulates to a radiator area **112** on the body **93** where the heat can be transferred to the surroundings. The circulation can be natural thermo-siphon circulation, based on the density differences or forced, utilizing a pump **110**. An added benefit can be derived from the optical coupling of the fluid between the junctions **98** or facets **94** and the cover **103**. At an air plastic or glass interface typically 4% of the light is reflected back. With two such interfaces the loss will be 8%. The cooling fluid is selected such as to have a refractive index that it is close to the plastic, ceramic or glass used in the cover **103** and this loss mechanism is eliminated boosting efficiency.

FIG. **7** is an illustration of a typical application using the digital lamps as proposed in the present invention. A digital lighting fixture such as the puck shaped illuminating unit **66** of FIG. 4 described earlier shown here as **120** and **121** would be used to illuminate steps **122** by being affixed to the wall **123** or onto or within a railing **124**. A pedestrian **125** using the stairs would not be blinded by stray light reaching his or her eye's since the highly controlled light beams of the SLS **50** in FIG. **4** are aimed downward and have a sharp cut off of light distribution at an angle such that even a pedestrian coming from below and looking up the steps would not see the light source (except from a great distance on long stairways where the light intensity is weakened by the distance and does not glare). A right handed and left handed fixture design would further prevent any blinding light by always illuminating the stairs with SLS aimed toward the nadir or at angles from the nadir in the upward direction of the stairs up to 70 degree angle **126** and by having the fixtures mounted below the eye height of short adults **125** or children who walk stairs at night. A low voltage transformer **127** located within or by the outlet box or at any other power supply juncture can supply power, free from the danger of causing electric shock. A motion detector **128** could be a separate device or as propounded in this invention, be an integral part of the fixture and could cause the fixture to change color and illuminate in amber, red or green to signal the approach of the last or first step.

In a solar energy powered application, the motion detector would turn the DLFs on or alternately increase power. To conserve energy, when there is no foot traffic, it would operate in a low power mode where it is visible and gives a general outline of the terrain to warn of approaching steps. When motion is detected it would switch to a mode where it actually illuminates the steps for correct foot placement to prevent mishaps.

In another embodiment the railing **124** is an aluminum or steel extrusion **129** specially constructed to accept the lighting fixture **130** and formed with brackets **131** to carry the conductors which supply electric power. The railing is actually a combined railing lighting fixture and carries out the both functions including providing elements for the power distribution. Grooves along the extrusion accept mounting brackets **132** that facilitate attachment to the wall or upright post **133** and also have a locking mechanism such as fastener **134**. It is to be understood that any other shape or material of railing, fixture and combinations of bracket and extrusions can carry out the similar function of a combined railing—lighting fixture device.

In another embodiment the railing is a standard railing profile **135** available in the industry and the digital lighting fixture is shaped in an arced or banana shape **136** or has a bracket shaped to facilitate its merging with the railing. An insulated electrical conducting element, **137** runs along the railing to provide power to the fixtures at intervals along its length.

FIG. **8** illustrates the use of the linear packaged digital lighting fixture **70** as described earlier in FIG. **5**, here shown as **140** in a step **141** or stairwell lighting application. The power and lighting need to be distributed substantially linear at constant distance **142** of the light source from the stairs to be illuminated and the correct light distribution for the task is designed into the SLS and or digital lighting fixture from ground up. The angle **143** of light distribution from the SLS is such that it takes the mounting height **142**, step **141** width **144** and required illumination level into account. The lighting fixture may attach to the wall **145** or onto the handrail **146**. The person's **147** presence is detectable by a motion detector **148** as he nears the last step **149** and indication by a change in color or frequency can be signaled by a segment of the lighting fixture. Alternately, [illegible] in color

to save power as with a solar energy installation, the detector may cause a change in the power supplied to the DLFs.

FIG. **9** depicts a DLF **160** which can be used in pathway lighting where upon being installed at the correct orientation the SLS **161** are aimed in a controlled wide distribution **162** (but yet not in the wasteful, present-day practice of 360 degrees), such that they illuminate a section **163** along a walkway **164** of standard width **165** with equal light distribution and there is no stray light upward or to the rear. A marker, **166** situated on the fixture **160**, aids in orienting the fixture perpendicular to the path. Alternately, shrubbery **167** can be illuminated with another grouping of upward aimed SLS **168** with a more spotlight like distribution alternately of another color spectrum which may illuminate the green growth in a more aesthetic light. The group **167** may be mounted on a swivel base **169** so that it can be aimed independently of the path lighting SLS aimings. A dedicated shrubbery illuminating DLF configuration is another alternative. A stake **170** is used to install the DLF in the ground at the correct orientation and may be provided with an electrical connection box to hook up to power through piecing quick connectors as is known in the art. Alternately the DLF can be self-sufficient with an onboard power source consisting of solar cell **171** and batteries. As described in previous devices, in more embellished embodiments, onboard control logic circuitry and sensors are employed to control intensity, color spectrum and on/off switching. A motion detector **172** can control the transition from a standby mode to full operation.

FIG. **10** is a graph of the preferred parameters for lighting color temperature at different illuminance levels. It is adapted from the IES Lighting Handbook 8th edition 1993 and illustrates the Kruithof effect. It is used here as a sample of one of the recommended lighting procedure templates used by controlling logic circuitry on a DLF to keep lighting parameters such as color temperature, color rendering properties, illuminance levels and distribution in optimal bounds. Other control parameters such as switching on and off and color change used to signal critical circumstances are examples of look up, truth tables and media storage data that can be provided to a controller.

Shown in FIG. **11** is a revisited step light which incorporates the chip technology introduced in FIG. **6** into the step light application which has been used to demonstrate the general method of digital luminaire design as espoused by the present patent. The intent is to illustrate the advantages of the placement of the junctions on a facet configuration over the discrete component approach in the previously described step light design of FIG. **4**. The significant feature that stands out is the size reduction. Many junctions are packed in a facet and the facets are cast in epoxy at the correct position and angle to properly illuminate the steps. Again the entire lighting fixture function is carried out in this properly shaped button-like device which yields the correct light distribution. A button shaped step light **170** is shown on the bottom side of the railing section **171**. A power cable **172** single wire (it can be a single conductor with the railing serving as the other conductor) supplies AC or DC power, which for safety considerations can be low voltage. The power, sensor and control circuitry package **173** makes contact **174** with the power cable **172** and distributes power to the light generating discrete LED or multiple-packaged facet elements **175**. The light facets **175** are strategically located on the relevant geometric surface of **170** such that their aimings contribute to the illumination **176** of the steps from the preferred direction and at even intensities. While facet **175** is contributing light at higher angles on the receding step surfaces facet **177** is illuminating **178**, the close face of the upward step **179**. In manufacturing such a luminaire the components must all be wired together and then positioned in their proper locations at the exact angles. This can be done with automatic machinery while the components are in the flat. Each component is placed by automated pick-and-place machinery in a hollow where it is temporarily set and where the wiring is attached as well. The hollow is actually a computer positionable setting and all the hollows are moved with the components in situ into the molding positions. An epoxy like spray is used to temporarily lay up the components until the final encapsulation into the final "button" shaped lighting fixture. This is a general lay-up method and applies to subassemblies as well, which can later be brought together before final encapsulation. Conductors that require subsequent electrical connection are mechanically or chemically covered during the spraying process.

In another preferred embodiment shown in FIG. **12** the DLF is an Adaptive Digital Lighting Fixture. As opposed to a DLF described earlier, is not pre-designed with light source aimings based on a pre-known application. Instead the DLF is equipped with a plethora of light sources ready for most of the conceivable lighting tasks in the illuminated area. The light sources are then controlled such as to adapt the lighting to the room construction and the lighting tasks at hand. The same technique applies to outdoor area lighting applications. This universal DLF is the preferred design when the cost of having an overabundance of light sources is low enough such that other economic considerations such as minimizing stocking units in inventory, repeated changing of the room tenants etc will be more expensive. It is similar to purchasing a 100-Watt lamp where a 40 W lamp would suffice and always operating it on 60% dimming. The capacity is there but it is unwise to use it since electricity is costly.

The adaptive or intelligent DLF **190** shown in FIG. **12** has multiple light sources **191** placed about the body **192** having a geometric shape. The shape, which influences the spatial light distribution, may be of a fixed or flexible design. In a flexible design, solenoids, servo motors, actuators, pumps, controlled fluid or air pressure devices **193** are used to realign surfaces, moveable plates or expandable tubes or cylinders **194** to morph the topology of the fixture. The ADLF is equipped with an electronic power supply, computer control and communications unit **195**. One or more light sensors **196** are placed strategically to detect necessary inputs. Alternately one or more digital cameras **197** with a photodetector array which is equipped with a lens which can be a 360 degree lens or a fisheye lens is placed with a field of view of the area to be illuminated. The geometric shape of the body **192** is such that an asymmetric lighting pattern is produced for the provision of a non-circular lighting pattern in a typically rectangular room. Because more light needs to be directed to the far corners of the room, more surface area for projecting SLSs at that position is required. If multiple fixtures are used in a large room then squared lighting patterns will obviate the need for overlapping coverage as with circular distribution luminaires or the prior art. Concave section **198** increases the ADLF surface area available for light source mounting at the room corner orientations. In bottom view **199**, a section of the body **192** is shown with asymmetric surface cut out **198** which increases the available surface area on the ADLF.

Spatially differentiated motion detectors **200** are provided on the Adaptive Digital Lighting Fixture along with the light sources **191** and light sensors **196**. Preferably motion detec-

tors have been associated with lighting in motel rooms to shut off the lighting if there is no activity. There is another level of control that can include matching the lighting to type and amount of activity. On sport fields for example, 200 lux may be used general sport activities, 1,000 lux for night practice sessions while 3,000 lux is used in a televised game. Taken to the extreme, one or more limited field-of-view motion detectors **200**, or camera **197**, can be used to follow the whereabouts of room occupants. The DLF controller acts to provide heightened lightning to the occupants" present locations. The controller has stored look-up-tables, instruction sets and algorithms which it uses to processes the information communicated from the sensors or a camera and in response control the light provided to the illuminated area.

A special or standard remote control unit **201** can be used to operate and program the ADLF. In one embodiment the control **201** is equipped with a laser pointer and/or light sensor **202** that is used to assist in providing positional an angular data on the location of work surfaces, room structures and dimensions. The control **201** can then pass on information concerning the visual task performed at that specific location. This data now enables the controllerl **95** to use stored algorithms, look-up-table templates to calculate and program the correct lighting intensities and spectrum for that room location as explained earlier in the block diagram as functionality **7** and computer processes **7**A. The photometer on the remote control **201** held at the specific location will then corroborate the illumination and spectral performance of the ADLF with the specific light source aiming being programmed at the particular instant. The communication can be optical in the visual or infrared wavelength or wireless. An antenna **203** is provided for wireless communication. The adaptive DLF is thus manually capable of being programmed with all the input parameters necessary for a computer program **7**A as is practiced in the art of lighting design, to determine the correct intensities and spectrum to carry out the visual tasks at a specific room location. This is a unique property for a single luminaire. Lighting designers are usually forced to compromise and provide the entire room or area with the highest common denominator of lighting in the room. With the ADLF nonglaring, spectrally correct lighting at minimum intensities is provided and this affords significant energy savings. The added daylight and activity related dimming functions are another significant energy savings factor with its ensuing economic and environmental benefits.

A calibration system is provided in the form of calibration element **204** constructed such that it has coverage of the light source radiation on the ADLF body **192**. The calibration element **204** is a reflective rod or strip the surface of which **205** has a wide spectrum, non-angle of incidence dependency and stable reflection characteristics over time. The reflectance of **205** is known at each wavelength and it serves as the standard reflector for the calibration routine. The reflective rod or strip is moveable so that it can reflect light back to the outward facing photodetector **196** based on the ADLF body **192**. To test SLS performance the calibration element **204** is rotated about the body **192** by actuator or motor **206**. When the reflecting surface **205** is opposite a column of SLSs **191**, the controller times the firing of each independently addressable SLS **191** location and acquires detector **196** intensity readings uniquely for each SLS. The results of the test firing are analyzed in controller **195** which has the functionality described in FIG. **1** of components **7** and software **7**A. Correction is made to the junction power supply parameters in order to maintain metametrically balanced outputs for white light and overall lumen production. The controller **195** re-powers the SLS **191** again using the updated power supply instruction set and retests for accuracy. The process continues until the SLS performance is repeatable at different power levels. In another embodiment the ADLF is provided with a calibration wand **204** on which inward facing photodetectors **207** are placed. The calibration wand is capable being positioned such that the detectors **207** can detect SLS **191** performance as the wand **204** is rotated about the body **192** and SLS **191** are independently tested as describe in the previous embodiment. Both the reflective rod/strip and calibration wand **204** are narrow such that when not in use, rod/strip/wand **204** is parked at a specific position where it does not block light sources **191**. In another embodiment the rod, strip or wand is stored and is only deployed when calibration is required. When called upon, the deployed rod, strip or wand **204** is rotated around the DLF body **192** to read SLS **191** intensities. Alternately, the DLF body **192** rotates and the rod, strip or wand **204** remains fixed.

An ADLF **190** outfitted with computer calculation, communication, calibration and other feature may be costly, such that using a number of units to illuminate a room is impractical. Correct lighting practice encourages the use of multiple point light sources to illuminate an area using a number of criteria. A single fixture cannot cover an area larger than glare and mounting height considerations allow. There is a limit on the maximum angle of light provision. Another consideration has to do with the production of shadows. Finally due to the cosine law there is a practical maximum angle at which the lighting can be delivered. At large angles the lighting effect becomes negligible. Therefore, due to all the above considerations it is advantageous to have multiple lighting fixtures in a room. A single ADLF **190** is used in a large room. The ADLF is designed to be used with one or more satellite reflectors **220** which are strategically positioned about the room. The satellite has provision for being attached to a supporting structure such as a ceiling or light pole and being fixed with a certain orientation in relation to the ADLF **190** and the working surfaces below. The satellite's inward facing surface is a highly efficient specular, semi-specular or diffuse reflector or combinations thereof. A part of the surface **221** is provided with a full spectrum, white reflector which may be a spot or a band across the top bottom or middle or all combinations thereof used in calibrating the intensity and or spectrum photodetectors and/or light sources over the lifetime of the DLF. A part of the surface may be a special reflector **221** such as a retroreflector which will serve as a ray targeting aid useful in the installation process of the satellites. The targeting can be manual using a red laser pointer or automatic using the detectors **196** on the ADLF **190** and the retroreflector **221** on the satellite **220**. A section **222** of light sources, which may be high power light sources, is dedicated to provide sufficient light to the other areas of the room or for specific task lighting applications such as to computer terminals which require lighting at small angles from the nadir. The section **222** may be on a swivel so as to be aimable at the satellite **220**. Section **222** projects light **223** at the satellite reflector **220**. In use, the satellite is installed substantially over the work area to intercept rays **223** from 222 so as to provide task-lighting **224**. The specular reflector **220** is positioned and angled such that it concentrates and re-directs the light rays **224** downward onto an area or worktable. The downward directed light coming at very small angles will illuminate the worktable **225** but will not cause veiling glare reflections on the computer screen **226**. To provide general lighting to room extremities, the satellite reflector **220** spreads

lar, semispecular or diffuse and has a surface geometry for reflecting the incident light **223** so that it spreads the light evenly over the area to be illuminated.

In place of the manual programming technique for ADLF **190**, a semi-automatic self-programming process using luminance measurement via detectors **196** is provided. The camera **197** has a view of the room its contents and occupants. Pattern recognition techniques known in the art are used to identify room occupants, furniture, office equipment such as computers etc, room structures such as walls and windows.

The intelligent lighting fixture system **190** is adaptive to the room structure, usage and occupants on a dynamic basis. In one embodiment a hand held laser pointer and sensor on the remote control **201** is used to assist in providing positional an angular data on the work surfaces and room structure enabling the controller to corroborate program lighting for the location with the specific light source aiming being programmed at the particular instant. The room occupants also use the remote control **201** at any instant to input lighting preferences or call up stored lighting scenarios to the DLF **190**. Thus the controller **195** or a controller **195** which communicates with a PC computer is provided with an interactive program which based on application look up tables will determine recommended light intensity and spectrum for the application at hand. Procedures useful in the lighting design process, lookup tables and specific application guidelines can be found in the IES Lighting Handbook 8th edition pages 447-903. A number of commercially available programs are available which prescribe lighting based on the application and calculate the illuminance based on the fixture. In this invention the procedure is reversed in that the recommendations are first used to generate the illuminance on or luminance from the room surfaces. The computer program **7**A is used to calculate the light intensities required at each angle in order to produce the desired illuminance or luminance results. Luminance in cd/m 2 is the reflection of the light flux lumen/m 2 from a surface having a reflectance property and is more similar to what the eye sees. The algorithms are processed onboard the ADLF **190** or run on a PC which communicates with the ADLF. Computer programming for lighting calculations and correct lighting practice recommendations is known in the prior art. Commercial programs using procedures based on IES, ILDA and other standards and professional lighting engineering and design organizations are available. Lumen Micro® and Simply Lighting® from Lighting Technologies Inc are examples of such programs which provide tools to create and simulate lighting layouts for both indoor and outdoor applications. Simply Lighting® is a suite of Windows®-based lighting analysis tools that are designed to answer the questions you need answered using a step-driven application targeted at a specific lighting application. Lighting Analysts, Inc AGI32® is a program used to predict lighting system performance for any application from one to hundreds of luminaires, interior or exterior. Users can build environments for most any electric lighting application with unlimited luminaires, calculation points, and reflective or transmissive surfaces including day lighting effects. The program used in this invention is an adaptation of a state of the art lighting programs. It is capable of receiving data inputs automatically or manually interpreting them according to correct lighting practice and calculating the candlepower distribution from the illuminance back to the luminaire. A post processor and outputs the operational instructions to the controller **195** for the application at hand.

The operation of the system is demonstrated in home use but the method is the same for office, store and industrial applications. The input program **7**A is user friendly including the use of icons representing pieces of furniture, e.g. table, lounge chair, equipment such as TV, computer etc, and visual tasks being performed such as reading, and watching TV. The homeowner moves about the room with the remote control **201**. At a specific location the homeowner enters the furniture type, possible occupant postures, sitting reclining, standing etc, and visual tasks to be performed. The room and its surfaces is defined the by being positioned at a wall, entering into **201** that it is a wall at that position and at another position entering that it is a window. The control unit **201** is optionally outfitted with a photometer **202** which can be used to read the surface reflectance of the wall and transmit the data to the lighting program **7**A. This is the same process a lighting designer uses to enter data to the lighting analysis programs. The lighting program as known in the art then specifies the correct lighting levels, aimings and spectrum for the different locations and uses throughout the room. This is reversing the typical design process as described earlier where the lighting fixtures performance is simulated on a computer and the results calculated. Here, the required illuminance results are known first and the fixture is then programmed to make them happen. The controller **195** uses its stored performance characteristics to determine the power supply to the SLS so that it provides the required intensities and obtain the required illuminance. The lighting calculations and programming of the power supply **195** of the light sources **191** is preferably performed in real time such that the sensor **202** detects the illuminance to corroborate the performance while the homeowner is still at the location. If the lighting is not to specification then the controller **195** readjusts the parameters so as to bring them in line. This trial and error process continues until the readings are within tolerance. The process is best carried out in the dark or when there is non-varying daylight. Alternately, the photometric reading sensors are on the luminaire and they are used to corroborate performance. Alternately, the process is automatic using feedback from the surroundings and pattern recognition to determine surroundings and applications.

Providing correct lighting for the various activities a homeowner in a room involves the use of numerous lighting regimes. Typically he or she would move about the room performing various activities with diverse lighting requirements. First, moving from the table where work was performed on the computer to a lounge chair to read the paper and finally moving to the sofa for a little relaxation watching TV. In prior-art practice, several lighting fixtures of different design are used to carry out the different tasks. In order to conserve energy each one would have to be turned on and off or dimmed as the resident moves about the room. A glare-shielded luminaire would be used for correct illumination in the computer task, while a floor lamp may provide lighting for reading on the lounge chair. General lighting from an overhead luminaire is sufficient for TV viewing. According to the present invention, as the room occupant moves about the room performing varied tasks, the motion detector **200** or camera **197** picks up the new location and from its stored templates which correlate location to lighting application, controller **195** provides the correct lighting regime.

According to the teachings of the present disclosure, the room lighting needs are provided by one or more DLFs or ADLFs including satellites or combinations thereof placed such that they are capable of providing lighting at the correct non-glaring angles for the lighting tasks [illegible] ADLFs

are programmed as to the whereabouts of furniture, computer monitors, TVs etc as described above. The ADLFs and DLF can communicate with each other and an ADLF can control a DLF and vise versa so that level lighting is accomplished in the room. Two or more DLFs can share in the illumination requirements of a location located between them. The DLF turns off its illumination towards a specific location, reads the ambient luminance and then correctly powers the SLS to provide the additional illumination. An oscillating "singing" feedback network incapable of settling is prevented by the provision of inexact timing. The DLF lighting assessment process occurs on a periodic basis as the controller surveys its numerous detectors and SLS, the complete cycle taking a number of seconds. The same process is occurring in the neighboring DLFs. A clock on the DSP controls the process. The DSP is programmed to randomly nudge the clock timing by a number of a multiple of milliseconds typical of the survey process from cycle to cycle. The similar timed assessment process with an independently random shift in timing occurs on the adjacent DLFs. Thus the chance of seesaw interaction between DLFs is insignificant. Alternately, communication between neighboring DLFs can also be used to synchronize the process and prevent feedback oscillations.

The novel lighting-application oriented approach to light-source construction, as taught by this invention impacts on the method involved with marketing the DLFs. Rather than speaking of a wattage for a lamp or lighting fixture, now with DLF technology, the area covered is the determining factor, somewhat like the coverage area of a can of paint printed on the container. The customer needs only to specify the room area and what the lighting is used for in order to select the correct luminaire. In today's prior-art process of selecting by lumen or wattage, there is an additional step, that of taking the effective lumen output and dividing it by the area of the room. Instead, a DLF is packaged and marked according to the area it will cover (when mounted at the designed for), mounting height (usually standard for most residential ceilings) and the lux it will provide or the visual tasks for which it is suited. Thus a homeowner in a store will be queried by the sales staff or be presented with instructional promotional media which allows for the determination of the room dimensions, type of room and typical activities carried out therein. The lists printed on the cartons for the various DLFs will include location types and task types. Location possibilities for consumer lighting include corridors, kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms, play areas, garages, driveways, backyard, playing fields, steps, workrooms etc. Task possibilities which would generally be a subdivision in a location type will include reading, dining, TV viewing, exercise, sport etc. A single DLF may be suitable for more than one location and task type and be so marked. Thus typical DLFs would come in bathroom, kitchen, garage, bedroom, hallway, and etc models. The bedroom model comes in a 12 ft. by 12 ft. Coverage and is also the TV room model etc. An ADLF is suitable for many more locations and applications and is so marked.

Industrial and commercial lighting DLFs are similarly marked and marketed. Mounting height determines the maximum area covered according to correct lighting practice principles and adds another variant less prevalent in the consumer market. The many DLF models will not exceed the plethora of prior art luminaire designs, as they are also based on mounting height and lighting application. While prior art luminaires rely on large reflector and every variant requires new investment in tooling, in a DLF a basic carcass will support many MSLS configurations with their particular amount of SLSs and their aimings.

In non-color critical applications for example in low lighting used for orientation a further energy saving can be obtained. LED junctions are made of different materials. The blue, green, and white illuminators utilize InGaN LEDs and the amber and red utilize AlInGaP for the junction material. Some materials are more efficient at converting electrical energy to visible light than others. As an example, (in terms only relevant at the time of this writing since the efficiencies are increasing daily), while a green LED which has the advantage of high photopic eye sensitivity to its wavelength, is producing only 30 lumen per watt, a super flux red LED can produce over 50 lumen per watt. Thus, when color rendering is not important in the lighting application at hand it is possible to shift the workload onto the more efficient LEDs. This of course must also take the eye sensitivity at the specific lighting intensity into account. While a purely scotopic rod eye response at extremely low light levels, less than 0.01 lux gives added sensitivity to the 510 nano-meter green blue, photopic vision at levels above 100 lux is most sensitive to the greenish yellow 555 nm wavelength. In most illuminated cases low lighting would not be below 5 to 10 lux where the sensitivity peak is around the 550 nm yellowish green. Thus two factors are used by 7 in 7A to calculate the most efficient light color of the DLF; the LED radiation power per watt multiplied by the eye sensitivity curve for the present illuminance value. In a less rigorous embodiment, if the par between the LED efficiencies is large such as in the example above, then the red LED is used combined in ratios with other wavelengths, such that the color still found acceptable by the users.

In a preferred embodiment, using pattern recognition techniques the ADLF **190** is semi or fully automatic in programming itself to correctly function where installed. The DLFs or ADLFs will adapt to the seating arrangement of room occupants in real time. In the preferred embodiment, the addition of a machine vision system with pattern recognition capabilities as is known in the art, easily deduces room occupancy and usage. The camera **197** including a wide angle or fisheye lens camera is mounted on the DLF or ADLF. In an alternate embodiment, one or more cameras in communication with the lighting system controller, has coverage of all, or part of the area to be illuminated. The camera may also serve as an illuminance and spectral measuring device as the individual detectors in the array, for example as on a CCD or CMOS array, may be read for their individual stimulus. The detector array pixels are calibrated to the room coordinates. The calibration routine can be manual or automatic. A manual method includes walking a controller around the room and programming in the coordinate to the camera system or alternately using a PC CAD program to input room coordinates overlaid on the image obtained from the camera such that the lighting system coordinates and the camera coordinates are the same. An automatic routine as in **7**A uses timed firing of a coordinate-specific light source, or array of light sources and the following reading of the camera detector of light reflected to that specific coordinates pixel, or set of pixels to corroborate action between light sources and the detectors. The detector pixels **197** can then be used to obtain images of the room which the controller **195** can assess as furniture, equipment or occupants. Pattern recognition methods known in the art, including neural networks, can provide a generalized stored application library of usages to the controller or the controller is an artificial intelligence controller and can learn the actual room usage with time. Output from the CCD array

are analyzed by appropriate computational means employing trained pattern recognition technologies, to classify, identify or locate the contents. These techniques known in the art are covered in texts such as: Schalkhoff, Pattern Recognition, statistical, structural and neural approaches, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1992 and Neural Networks for Pattern Recognition by Christopher M. Bishop, Chris Bishop, Oxford University Press; (January 1996) included herein by reference. Thus, the controller with or without human intervention will program the ADLF lighting system to carry out lighting within the realm of correct lighting practice. This includes providing the correct illumination in real-time based on occupant whereabouts, activity being performed and outside factors such as sunlight contribution, time of day factors etc. Advanced robotic vision techniques including object segmentation and selective-attention modeling (Itti, Visual attention and target detection in cluttered natural scenes in Optical Engineering, Vol. 40 No. 9, September 2001 included herein by reference) will aid in identifying various room objects and the lighting program **7**A will associate with their location the visual tasks and recommended lighting characteristics. In case if the machine settings are not acceptable to the users, provision is made for human intervention. Through the data input device **201** a user, the ultimate "sensor" corrects or customizes the lighting arrangement and reprograms the controller.

In a further ADLF intelligent lighting system improvement over prior-art practice, machine vision is used to control surrounding luminance. A prime example is an office application where a computer Visual Display Terminal is in use. This is an application where the quality of the localized task lighting is important. Contrast plays a major role in seeing and glare plays a role in producing veiling reflections as causing fatigue. The correct illuminating solution involves the control of surrounding luminances. A prior art workstation design will include partition, carpet, ceiling and desk surface reflectance which reduce the luminance in the workers field of view. Using the ADLFs ability to recognize the computer screen chair, desk and surrounding floor and ceiling, the illuminance in lux on each element is varied to obtain the optimal luminance. That now allows any color scheme to be used by the interior designer on the work cell decor. The ADLF will control the luminance by varying the spatial light intensity distribution over the different surfaces.

In another embodiment using the camera **197**, the controller **195** is instructed to identify and track a roving speaker during a video presentation. A signaling device is used by the speaker to allow the pattern recognition program to initially lock-on and recognize a target attribute as is known in the art of object tracking. The signaling device can be a laser light pointer **202** aimed at the camera or a hand held remote control **201** in communication with the camera vision system. The controller **195**, based on the camera input runs the pattern recognition routines, derives the coordinates and generates instructions to drive the specific light sources with aimings which will project light at the speaker as the speaker move about the room. It is to be understood that in a theater lighting application there is no need for a preprogrammed moving light using motors to change position. Instead a fixed DLF or ADLF with multiple light sources powers the necessary light sources to illuminate the performer as he or she moves about the stage. This actually is similar to the banks of shuttered lights used in present day stage lighting. Only now the digital aspect of discrete multiple light sources allowing for a smooth transition of aimings with instantaneous control of almost infinite variation of spectrum and intensity is accomplished. The controller, once locked-on to the performer using images from the camera **197**, will now follow the performer around the stage illuminating instantaneously in the intensities and spectrum as preprogrammed in the choreographic setup or in correspondence to the music or some other characteristic as in known in stage lighting practice.

An emerging problem with LED light sources is that with the increase in light conversion efficiency the LEDs are becoming ever brighter and for their small size present uncomfortable sources of glare. These high intensity light sources would have to be used with diffusers which would impair the light control characteristic. One solution is to construct the DLF large enough such that the area over which the light flux emanates is sufficiently large that the luminance in candela per square meter will not exceed allowed luminous exitance values or glare limits. In this solution of increasing the luminaire area over which the light emanates, the number of light sources at specific location may not be sufficient to provide the continuum of light distributions and spectral combinations necessary to carry out correct lighting practice as per the teachings of this invention. Another way of looking at the problem is, that with added lumen output, a few high performance LEDs could provide the illumination for a room but due to even distribution and spectrum consideration many discreet SLS are required. That is, the SLS needed for the smooth continuum, digital aspect of the invention exceeds the number required for the maximum light flux.

In a preferred embodiment the DLF or ADLF is rotated about an axis such that the time any source in the glare causing zone is exposed to an observers eye is such that it is not observed as glaring and the time the source is out of view is below the flicker rate for that intensity level. HID and fluorescent lamps operated on 50 Hz have a 100 Hz flicker rate and are not considered to flicker. For aesthetic, aerodynamic and dynamic balance reasons the DLF can appear as the globe shape **190** of FIG. **12**. However, the now reduced dimension DLF is spun rapidly on its axis **227** by motor **206**. The LEDs can be concentrated in an arc from top to bottom along the surface **192** or be located in the concave arc section **198**. The concentration of SLS in this section is sufficient to offer a large number of spectral combinations at any aiming. Two arcs of SLS **191** opposite each other for balance or one arc with counterweight can be used. With one arc a 6,000 RPM rotation rate is used to prevent flicker and with two at 3000 rpm rate. In an alternate embodiment instead of a complete globe just an arc section such as **198** runs from top to bottom. The arc is on an axis and is motorized so it rotates rapidly on its axis. The speed of rotation is such that the light source does not appear to flicker. This way a compact unit can be made since the apparent brightness is reduced. This process is possible because the eye is an integrator of light over time and persistence of vision minimizes flicker. The LEDs **191** disposed along the surface are timed to fire in the correct intensity according to the instantaneous position. The timed operation is coordinated with room location. Thus, when the spinning light sources **191** are facing a corner more intense light at higher angles is projected so the far corner is illuminated equally to the areas near the DLF. The positionally correlated timed firings of the rotating DLF will illuminate as need per location per usage requirements in real time. The side of the room near the window receiving ambient daylight will receive less illumination than the opposing darker side. This is also possible because the controller electronic **195** operates much more rapidly than the mechanical motion and that desired [illegible] of the SLS's

extremely fast measured in single digit microseconds. In a preferred embodiment, the globe or arc can be placed in an outer jacket which is partially evacuated of gas. The globe or arc is then rotated in a partial vacuum envelope to reduce air friction losses.

In FIGS. **13**A through **13**C a streetlight fixture designed according to the teachings of this invention is shown. The design and functionality distinction as compared to prior-art streetlights is derived from the multi-light source, digital design. In FIG. **13**A the aesthetically designed DLF streetlight **240** is shown in a front view. The geometric shape is a derivation of the surface geometry for mounting the SLS perpendicularly thereon to obtain photometric light distribution compatible with the requirements of the street lighting application. These photometric distributions are expressed in terms of luminaire cutoff angle which refers to the angle beyond which rays capable of producing glare are prevented from exiting the fixture. Another type of classification used by the IES, refers to the elongation of the light pattern along the road in terms of Long, Medium and Short and another categorization, perpendicular to the roadway called "Type", describing the distance in units of mounting height (where the fixture is mounted), that is illuminated. The novel design includes SLS with over 100,000 hour lifetime allowing for the fixture to be factory sealed for life. This obviates the need for cleaning reflectors, as all the exterior surfaces are cleanable by rain and there are no light sources at the sharp bottom drip point where dirt normally accumulates. The compact design **240** shown mounted on a pole **241** in side view FIG. **13**B has a small exposure area, reducing wind induced drag force loads on the pole. This low wind factor and low weight of the electronic components allows for the use of a less expensive pole. The pole arm **242** fits into slipfitter **243** which is provided to perform the mechanical fixing means of the DLF **240**. FIG. **13**C is a side section view through the center of the fixture. The electrical power and communications connection is made to a connector block **244** mounted such that it accessible for the external wiring of the fixture during installation. The grid power is connected to power supply **245** and the data to the controller DSP **246**. A dedicated communications line is used or the data is sent over the power line using communications protocols as known in the industry and the DLF communicate with each other or with a central control. The SLS aimings are shown in front view FIG. **13**A where the SLS aimings to the right **247** and left **248** along the roadway show how an even distribution pattern out to the maximum design distance from the pole center is obtained. This distance is a function of the fixture mounting height and cutoff angle. Hole-through SLS units have been drawn to illustrate the point but the principle the design is valid for SMD, SMT, the chip **94** design of FIG. **6** as well as other package arrangements known in the art. Many more SLS **249** are concentrated at the larger angles **250** to illuminate out to the extremes of the area covered by the DLF. Fewer SLS **251** are needed at the small angles near the pole to maintain with equal illumination. The SLS at the cutoff angle **250** have a tightly controlled beam spread **252** to maintain a sharp cutoff, minimize glare and eliminate spill light. The SLS **253** in the interior have a wider beam spread **254**. The DLF **240** projects light in a highly controlled pattern perpendicular to the roadway as well SLS **255** as seen in the side sectional view FIG. **13**C are aimed such that the cutoff angle **256** is out to the road width with or without the shoulders as designed. In applications where illumination for a sidewalk is required, "house side" illumination is provided by inward SLS aimings **257**. On a dual carriageway road where the illumination provided is limited to a single carriageway, the lighting from the roadway fixture need not be symmetric about the nadir along the roadway. While approaching the streetlight, glare is to be avoided and the cut-off angles must be small for light aimed at the advancing vehicles. However, after passing the streetlight, the lighting in the direction of travel may be provided at increased beam angle from nadir and still not cause glare. This would significantly increase pole spacing saving cost and eliminating hazardous poles.

In all stages of the SLS positioning and aiming design process which works in reverse of the normal process by engineering from the illumination required on the working surface back to the light source. Glare ratings for the design are checked to make sure they are within the acceptable limits. If the light source concentration is such that drivers or pedestrians in normal eye viewing conditions would experience glare then the luminous exitance is lowered by design changes in the geometry or light source attributes. The ramifications of a dynamic and exact light control are numerous in a street light luminaire. First there is no spill light and no light trespass. If the position of a luminaire is such that light is shining into a house the individual SLS at that aiming is not powered by the control **246**. All the light power is placed where needed in the designed for illumination intensity, neither in deficit nor excess. While prior art luminaire show 80% of the light falling in the area designed to be illuminated, the DLF will have a near 100% utilization factor.

When artificial intelligence methods known in the art is combined with the fine control and functional flexibility of the DLF additional advantages are realized. A detector or camera **258** in concert with a logic controller **246** is capable of providing the road lighting needs to a driver or group of drivers in according to the time of day, needs of the roadway layout and usage at any moment. The detector **258** will provide signal to the controller **246** of the ambient lighting conditions. When daylight is no longer sufficient for viewing such as at dusk the DLF will add lighting. At dawn the process is reversed. In an alternate embodiment the roadway lighting can be dimmed if there are no approaching vehicles. The detector or camera **258** is capable of detecting oncoming and retreating traffic. The headlights and backlights are used or more sophisticated pattern recognition is used to determine traffic on the roadway. When there is no traffic the luminaire will illuminate at a fraction of the power used to generate the 5 or 10 lux used in street lighting. Taken to the extreme the controllability of the DLFs or series of communicating DLF street lights allows for the lighting to precede the vehicle by the stopping distance, say 300 ft. at 65 MPH (91 meters), and dim the unused lighting behind the driver if it is not necessary for other drivers. In the late hours of the night when traffic is low this function can save significant amount of energy. A typical 250 W HPS streetlight will consume over 25,000 Kwh in its 20 yr lifetime. On moonlit nights the dimming of the DLF can be greater as moonlight provides up 0.10 lux. The dimming of SLS actually improves their lighting efficiency and prolongs lifetime. Dimming of HID sources has a negative return, typically 10% light at 50% power. The color spectrum of the light is also varied in the DLF to match the intensity levels. Here an additional efficiency boost is achieved when the added scotopic eye sensitivity to 510 nm bluish white similar to the pale moonlight is taken into account.

It has been shown that certain colors of light i.e. of different spectral power distribution (SPD) are perceived to be more glaring than others in Night Driving Studies of

drivers (Flannagan, M. J., (1999). Subjective and objective aspects of headlamp glare: Effects of size and spectral power distribution, Report No. UMTRI-99-36). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute) indicate that blue-white color has been found to cause more glare discomfort than yellow light. On the other hand, studies have shown that driver night vision is better under the blue-white spectral power distribution. Recent laboratory studies have also shown, for example, off-axis detection peripheral detection can be better for bluish, metal halide lamps than for yellowish, high pressure sodium lamps at the same photopically specified light level (Bullough, J. and Rea, M. S. 2000. Simulated driving performance and peripheral detection at mesopic light levels, Lighting Research and Technology, 32 (4), 194-198). In the DLF streetlight luminaire it is possible to use the blue-white SPD to illuminate most of the roadway yet increase the cutoff angle, which is determined by glare considerations, by using yellow-white SPD light at the large angles which throw the light further along the road. The higher angle lighting provides more vertical lumens and is actually more effective at illuminating objects along the roadway. The increased visibility afforded by the added vertical lumens at high angles offsets the decrease in visibility due to the yellow-white SPD. This means that the overall visibility over the roadway sections is constant. Thus, SLS near the angle **250** would have a yellow-white non-glaring SPD while interior SLS such as **253** would have the superior blue-white SPD. The higher the cutoff angle, the fewer luminaires that are required to illuminate a roadway. The same differentiation would be possible with SLSs **255** in the side view of which some illuminate the sidewalk **257**, some the right lane and others the left lane. The SPD of the SLSs at the high glare causing angles **250** facing the oncoming driver aimed to cover the near lane would be yellowish while those SLS covering the same lane but now to the rear of the receding driver, will still be of bluish-white SPD. The opposite is true for the far lane. The SPD of the SLS aimed **257** at covering the sidewalk would again be in the blue-white to aid in peripheral vision detection of pedestrians or objects approaching the roadway from the side.

As with all correct lighting practice the visual surroundings at any instant in time determine the amount of illumination required to carry out visual tasks including the luminance of background surfaces. Roadway luminance as detailed in the IES Handbook pages 751-779, is the preferred factor used in specifying required illumination levels. Freshly paved blacktop with its diffuse reflection will change over time to a mostly specular reflection. The higher luminance value pavement requires less illumination to see objects. This characteristic changes over time with wear and periodic road maintenance and illumination levels need to vary accordingly. A detection by **258** of this road luminance will provide the controller will the data necessary to set the required illumination. Roadway activity is another factor in determining illumination levels. This factor often changes over days of the week or seasons of the year. An adaptive DLF with detectors **258** and computer devices **246** capable of recording this traffic activity will provide the correct illumination for the traffic situation at hand.

Though the design of a streetlight has been detailed the same design process is valid for floodlights and other outdoor lighting applications. The use of the SLS of specific spatial candlepower distributions at particular aimings, the use of tighter beams at the edges of coverage, the non-glare design and the optional use of logical control are as applicable to DLF floodlight design as to the street light design.

FIG. **14** is a flow chart which illustrates the general design concept which allows anyone to build a multi-light source lighting fixture from the ground up, tailor made to the final application. This process differs fundamentally from prior art lighting fixture design. Rather than building a fixture around a common lamp and then coercing the usually isotropically radiating lamp to perform in a certain application, the lighting application is used to describe the light source construction. The light source construction is unique in that its flux density is spatially differentiated over its volume in concert with its final orientation when in use. The light source design then defines the supportive power, control and mechanical elements. These elements are then integrated into a single unit with shared components and packaging. The method for designing an application oriented luminaire designed according to correct lighting practice, providing the correct light intensity, spectrum, and spatial distribution of intensity and spectrum, suited to the specific lighting application, would comprise a number of steps some of which can be left out of the process while others may be added including a) determining the lighting application, and the recommended lighting practices for the application b) determining the luminaire mounting height, illumination area covered and surrounding conditions typical of the application c) determining candlepower required to effect the required illumination over the area d) selecting SLS types capable of producing required intensities and spectrum at highest conversion efficiencies at lowest economic cost e) determining SLS beam spreads f) determining SLS aimings for the required distribution pattern g) determining electronics to control and power SLS h) determining lighting fixture surface geometry and size i) testing whether the glare rating for the viewing angle is acceptable j) if the glare rating is not acceptable, then changing SLS beam spread, fixture geometries, or size, resulting in an acceptable glare rating; and, h) when the glare rating is acceptable, then designing the luminaire aesthetics for the application.

The digital lighting concept is extended to transportation vehicle applications. A headlamp for an automobile uses multiple light sources based on electro luminescence of semiconductor junctions. The proposed unique approach is to combine the lighting engineering function i.e. the correct light distribution, color spectrum and level necessary for the visual task at hand into the lamp such that the digital lamp obviates the need for additional light controls and fixtures. The digital electronic lamp utilizes ⅓ the energy and has over 100,000 hours lifetime versus 2000 for an automotive incandescent lamp and can be rapidly switched on and off without deleteriously affecting lifetime. (Quite the opposite, off time is not part of the lifetime). The multiple light-source, digital device, is an electronic headlight which provides the driver with the correct aiming, illumination level and distribution (e.g. parking lights, low beam, high beam, lighting around curves and corners) based on input from the vehicle's speed, steering wheel position, turn signal indicator and detection of approaching headlights. These functions are carried out automatically however; the standard manual override controls are still maintained.

Headlamp glare is addressed in two alternate ways. European regulators recognize the danger presented by excessive headlamp glare, and so European cars with HID lamps must have dynamic headlamp leveling. On-the-fly headlamp vertical aim adjustment has been required by European directives for quite some time now, but dashboard dial control of the vertical aim is no longer acceptable. Recent European regulations require that the headlamp leveling of HID-equipped cars be linked to the suspension system of the car.

so the lamps don't glare as much to oncoming traffic when the rear of the car is loaded-down or the car is heading up a small hill. The digital headlamp solves this problem by automatically sensing the angle of the headlamp assembly and will employ in real time only the properly aimed light sources to illuminate so as not to glare oncoming traffic.

An alternate method of glare control is accomplished by rapidly switching on and off the headlamp light output or only the high beam portion thereof at such a rate that flicker is not observed by the driver. This persistence of vision is the same effect on which motion picture viewing operates using shutters to intermittently block the light while the frame changes. On the oncoming vehicle, a variable light transmitting element, an electronic shutter, located in the driver's field of view is rapidly switched to a blocking state synchronized in time with the on state of the oncoming car's headlamp. The situation is vise versa for the driver in the other vehicle such that in the instant one driver is seeing the other is not.

The Spectral Power Distribution, SPD, of the headlamp is also variable as a function of the area being illuminated. Studies by Flannagan cited earlier, have shown a preference by drivers for yellow tinted headlights on oncoming vehicles. The drivers find the yellowish colored light of an incandescent less glaring vs. the bluish "white" light of an HID Metal Halide lamp. On the other hand recent studies by Bullough, cited earlier, on driver's peripheral night vision show the clear benefits of HID MH headlamps in detecting pedestrians and objects along the side of the road. Thus an ideal solution is to have the SPD in that part of the beam visible to oncoming drivers be of the less glaring yellowish type while the beams headed everywhere else would be of the blue-white SPD for increased driver visibility. In fog or snow the color spectrum would also be adjusted so as to maximize visibility. Yellow colored lights are used in fog and snow conditions to prevent flashback. Thus according to the teachings of this invention the DLF headlamps serve as the fog-lamps. The digital headlamp will automatically or manually be adjusted to the optimal intensity and SPD lighting parameters for the environmental conditions at hand.

Present advances in automobile lighting include Adaptive Frontal-lighting Systems which aid in seeing around curves and other features in the road. In these systems the light distribution pattern and color spectrum will be changed according to the instantaneous road conditions at hand. Thus, the headlamp now has much more flexibility than the high beam/low beam variation of today. At any instant in time the intensity, spectrum and beam pattern of the headlamp may be varied as a function of the drivers intent, lay of the road and environmental factors. A GPS system on the car may also let the headlamps system know of curves up ahead, one way traffic and others factors such the headlamp may be operated in the optimal mode at that instantaneous location. With sensors sensitive to environmental surroundings such as ambient light, fog or snow conditions etc. lighting can be adapted to the optimal operating regime.

Additional features include an optional concentrated flashlight type of beam to illuminate distant overhead and roadside signs, which due to the narrow directed beam will not blind oncoming traffic. Image recognition via a camera will allow the beam to follow the retroreflective sign as the vehicle moves or the signs will be provided with a special marker for this purpose. In this way the headlamp cutoff above horizontal except for the concentrated sign beam can be total.

FIG. **15** illustrates a preferred embodiment of a digital automotive headlamp. A headlamp is a specialty lighting application unrivaled in terms of the need for controllability and is especially suitable to the methods and devices described in this disclosure. The headlamp fixture is unique in the continuum of beam patterns, intensities and color spectrum. The number of possible control modes are: 1. Parking Lights. 2. Low Beam lights; 3. High Beam; 4. Cornering Lights; 5. Load leveling adjustment; 6. Integral turn signal indicator, 7. Programmable alternate beam spread selection so that one headlamp fulfills the different sets of legal regulations for the high and low beam in different regions of the world such as the U.S.A., Japan and Europe; 8. Driver preferential color; 9. Oncoming vehicle or vehicle-ahead driver's preferred color **10**. Color of ambulances extra headlamp provides red flashes to be more easily picked up in rear view mirror; and 11. Non-Glaring pulsed headlamps.

Input data to the controller would first and foremost be in the control of the driver and would consist of an overriding manual selector switch. Otherwise headlamp control is automatic, from turning on automatically when ambient lighting levels fall to such a level where it is advantageous to have headlamps on, either to aid in illuminating the way ahead or facilitate being seen by others, to automatic dimming of high beam due to detection of oncoming vehicles and shut off when ambient lighting levels are sufficient. A possible control system for such purposes is described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,281,632 by Stam, et-al from Aug. 28, 2001 titled: A Continuously variable headlamp control incorporated herein by reference. The patent describes how continuously variable headlamps offer greater flexibility for roadway illumination but offer challenges in automatic control design. Each continuously variable headlamp has an effective illumination range varied by changing at least one parameter from a set including horizontal direction aimed, vertical direction aimed, and intensity emitted. Stam discloses a system for automatically controlling continuously variable headlamps on a controlled vehicle includes an imaging system capable of determining lateral and elevational locations of headlamps from oncoming vehicles and tail lamps from leading vehicles.

Using a control system such as that above, many driver functions are automated. With the digital headlamp, automatic control of headlight beam is a function of speed of travel, that is: when vehicle is in Park the parking lights are on, when speed is low the lamp beam is aimed sufficiently forward to give ample reaction to brake for objects in the vehicle's path per the speed it is traveling up to the intensity, angle and thus distance which is the upper legal limit for the beam. If there is no oncoming traffic then it operates as the high beam. If there is oncoming traffic then it acts as the regular low beam.

Additional features can include an optional very narrow flashlight type of beam. Present day LEDs come in very narrow aimings such as two half angle 8 degrees which may not be narrow enough (a 10 meter spread for 150 meters down the road which may be sufficiently aimed to the right) but with need, smaller angles are also feasible. Such a beam at the correct narrow aiming can continue to illuminate far ahead (in high beam) without blinding oncoming traffic. Analysis by a detector or an imaging system of the oncoming vehicles position (using its headlights for example) can be used to determine which exact aiming is the maximum allowable for any given traffic situation and road layout.

Using color and pattern recognition techniques it is possible to determine what is a sign [illegible] possible to

provide the equivalent of "task lighting" and use the controller and properly aimed SLS to follow and illuminate distant overhead and roadside signs for a longer time, yet not blind oncoming traffic due to the narrow beam.

Wavelength specific SLSs in the infrared or near Ultra Violet spectrum, not visible to the driver by the unaided eye are used for communication between vehicles and roadway controllers or toll booths. Infrared SLS will provide radiation to be reflected from objects for night vision cameras. UV SLS are used for or illuminating UV fluorescent dyes in clothing bicycles and baby carriages to increase pedestrian visibility as is known in the art.

In FIG. **16** a headlamp **270** of a land, sea or air vehicle **271** is shown in front view **272**, side view of a section **273** and top view of a section **274**. A discreet SLS light source such as an LED **275** with specific location within the cluster **276** has a specific spatial light distribution, color wavelength and aiming relative to the vehicle, such as straight ahead, and or downwards and or off towards the right or left. The SLS may have one junction and be monochromatic or have a many junctions and provide a wide spectral power distribution and the power to the SLS may be varied. An SLS can also be a "white" LED. For example a typical "white" LED such as a Luxeon® white LED such as LXHL-XXXX will have a colder "bluish" 4,500K color temperature. LED **277** at a second location within the same cluster may have a similar or dissimilar aiming, wavelength and spatial light distribution. The concept cluster shown by the dashed lines, is used to describe a control function and is not necessarily related to contiguous placement. In general a cluster may be deemed a separate grouping due to a function it performs, either exclusively or in conjunction with other clusters or subclusters, such as high beam function versus a second cluster **278** which may provide a parking light function. The same SLS may be used, albeit at different intensities, for both the above functions and thus clusters may overlap and be discontinuous. As two LEDs may be of different wavelengths, operating in unison at different power levels will yield a variable light "color". A possible combination of two or more LEDs such as a blue, 470 nanometer and an amber 590, nanometer wavelength LED would yield a "white" light similar to the yellow tint of sunrise at the correct power intensity setting for each lamp. Coincidentally aimed LEDs **275** and **277**, at the correct output intensity of each LED, with more power in the amber will accomplish this. Thus when following another vehicle, assuming, as drivers have reported, that they find yellow incandescent colored headlamps less offending than the HID blue-white color, the external controller **279** which receives traffic data from sensors **280** would shift wavelength specific radiant power contributions of SLSs such that the resultant on the CIE chromacity diagram would be yellowish. If however there is no car immediately ahead or oncoming traffic, then assuming as drivers reported they see further with bluish light, then the energy of the 490 nanometer LED is increased and the resultant color will shift to bluish white, allowing the driver to better ascertain road conditions further up ahead. The LEDs, their packages, wavelength and light source type are mentioned by way of example and it is clear that any other types of discreet light sources, such as the chip **95** of FIG. **6**, with differing aimings wavelengths and distributions could be used to accomplish the same functions.

To further illustrate the innovative DLF headlamp device, a cluster **281** would be used to illuminate around a corner. Thus when the turn indicator has been selected or the steering wheel has been rotated by the driver, the DLF headlamp is powered by the controller to illuminate sideways at angles which according to the speed of travel is correct. (A driver can't make a 90-degree turn traveling 90 kph but from a stop, the turn may be around a corner.) In a preferred embodiment a multitude of LEDs in **281** are differently aimed in top view **274** showing the top view of the cluster **282** with SLS **283** angled less outwards and SLS **284** angled more outward with the forward aiming (distance ahead of the vehicle) of the more angled SLS **284**, closer in for illuminating sharp turn, than that of the less angled SLS **283** for a shallow curve. Side sectional view **273** shows a general downward aiming with SLSs of front view **272** cluster **285** corresponding to cluster **286** shown from the side. The cluster **286** is the most angled downward such as for a slow driving as in a parking light type of application where the idea is not to cause glare yet be seen. The parking light function can also be done with higher angled LEDs by just lowering the intensity to very low non-glaring intensities. Cluster **287** of the front view would be the main illuminating workhorse and is shown in side view **273** as angled SLSs in cluster **288** and top view **274** as cluster **289**. The top cluster **276** shown in side view **273**, as **290** would perform alone or in tandem with part of **287** the high beam lighting function.

Many more degrees of flexibility are possible with the digital headlamp by varying the timing of the LED operation. For example, more intense illumination of red LEDs for a fraction of time would give the effect of flashing ambulance lights if required by the type of vehicle and could be effected by programming alone without the need for a different type of headlamp greatly reducing the different types of headlights that need to be installed on a vehicle or maintained in inventory. That is the same MSLS light engine device could be placed in different aesthetic packages by different manufacturers and could provide different functions. In one embodiment the digital headlamp carries out all the functions in a single unit **270**. SLSs have different locations and aimings **291** and **292** to carry out the functions. In another embodiment **293** the spotlight sign illuminating function or corner lighting function is in a separate package **294** with its aiming **295**. The low and high beam lighting is accomplished with fixture **296** and its general aiming **297**. The separate units may be dictated by design or sales considerations and yield more flexibility but are within the scope of the overall integral digital lamp headlight device. The controller **279** will addresses the power supply of each DLF headlamp **270**, **296** and **294** independently such that each lamp performs its functions separately.

In another embodiment FIG. **16** the digital headlights **300** and **301** on vehicle **302** are also part of an anti-glare system operating between two or more vehicles **303**. The system is designed to prevent discomfort and disability glare from oncoming headlights or glaring headlights viewed in the rear view or side mirrors. The anti-headlight-glare system works based on the "persistence of vision" of the human eye-brain system and is accomplished by the synchronization of the illuminating and light attenuating or blocking devices which intermittently enable the driver to see the night scene ahead but not the counter-timed glare of oncoming vehicles. The elimination of blinding glare will increase traffic safety, as a driver may lose vision may for a number of seconds following a glare event. It will also prevent driver fatigue caused by glaring headlights. Another of the advantages of the anti-glare system is that it increases the distance that a driver can see at night by allowing the use of more powerful headlamps aimed at higher angles, thus illuminating more of the road ahead while not blinding oncoming traffic. The anti-glare system consists of pulsed headlamps **304** and **305**

on the oncoming vehicle **303** and a synchronized on/off switched light filtering or blocking element **306**A in between the driver's eyes **307** and the glare sources **304** and **305**. The light attenuating element is normally highly transmissive of light i.e., see-through. When energized, the light-attenuating element turns non-transmissive and attenuates or totally blocks the glare intensity. The attenuating element is similar in operation to the fast acting automatic darkening welding helmets commercially available, only here the off switching is also very rapid. The glare, or light-attenuating element may be the windshield, a part of the windshield be a specific element located on or within the windshield **306**A and **308**A or on a visor located in front of the driver shown in **306**B and **308**B. The light attenuating device **306**A or **306**B is synchronized with the oncoming headlight such that when low-beam or even high beam, glare causing headlamps **300** and **301** of vehicle "one"**302** is "on" the light attenuating device **308**A or **308**B on vehicle "two"**303** is toggled into a mode which reduces or totally blocks the light beams. Conversely, in the next instant, when the headlamps **304** and **305** of vehicle "two"**303** is "on", that is, in the glare causing mode, the light attenuating device **306** on vehicle "one" **302** is switched into a mode, which reduces or totally blocks the light beams. The light-attenuating device **306**A or **306**B consists of an LCD, ferroelectric, SPD, electrochromic or any other medium that can be switched between substantially light transmitting to substantially light blocking in the form of a screen, visor or film. It may be placed on the windshield from without or within, in between the glass layers of the windshield safety glass **306**A or positioned anywhere in between the drivers eyes and windshield **306**B including being worn as eye glasses. A motorcyclist would have it installed in the visor of the helmet or on a windscreen. The speed of vision is slow relative to electronic pulsation and depending on the illumination level persistence of vision will fuse on/off levels into a constant flicker free level. Motion pictures operate at 24 frames per second. For scotopic nighttime levels 10 HZ is sufficiently flicker free while at high levels of illumination 60 Hz is required. Totally flicker-free operation is assured at 120 Hz operation even for peripheral vision which is more sensitive to movement.

LEDs are excellent light sources for a pulsed lamp since they are not damaged by on/off cycling (actually off-time adds to the overall lifetime) as are the prior-art incandescent and other cathode based lamps. Rise time to full output is on the order of microseconds, much faster than necessary. The pulsed SLS is operated at a higher power during the on-time of the duty cycle to offset for the off-time in order to produce the required illumination. This is typical of normal LED operation which may be run in DC mode or pulsed, AC operation. Actually, HID lamps cycle on/off at twice the line frequency and the eye integrates the light intensity over time. However, it should be understood that incandescent or any other lamp switchable within the constraints of the flicker free visual requirement are acceptable for use according to the teachings of this invention. In an alternative embodiment, the lamp may be a state of the art incandescent, halogen or HID lamp and the switching is accomplished by an additional light-attenuating element placed in front of the light source. Alternately, electronic signal control circuitry can rapidly switch an HID or incandescent headlamp used in the anti-glare system. The lamp need not totally turn off, the requirement is that during the seeing portion of time when the driver's light attenuating element is letting light through un-attenuated, the light intensity reaching the eye is non-glaring. Therefore it should be considered that present state of the art incandescent and HID headlamps operated in a pulsed mode fall under the realm of the present invention. That is, any headlamp system where the high beam is toggled such that it is synchronized with a light-blocking element before the driver's eyes in the approaching vehicle is included within this disclosure. It is also to be understood that the headlamps when not in high beam mode may not be totally off rather they can be in a non-glaring low beam mode. This leaves the vehicle visible to oncoming traffic.

It is to be understood that for the system to work, all oncoming vehicles using high beam synchronized blocking must be working according to the same timing among them versus all the traffic headed in the opposite direction. A timing protocol based on major heading determines the synchronization. Thus, on a substantially north south route, a train of traffic headed north will all be similarly timed and counter synchronized with all southbound traffic. The blocking screen's timing is synchronized with the oncoming high beam headlight's timing either universally, through a global clock system such as that of the global positioning system GPS or the National Institute of Standards and Technology atomic clock broadcast over radio station WWVB located in Fort Collins, Colo. or locally through communication among vehicles in proximity to being within the line of sight. A combination of directional data together with a timing protocol based on direction will determine the synchronization among proximate north/south and east/west-bound vehicles. The vehicles direction data is derived from an onboard compass or gyro or GPS to eliminate the influence of roadway curves in cases of borderline directionality, the vehicle's direction for synchronization is not the instantaneous reading but rather is based on distance traveled over time and previous headings history. A stop and turn for example will change the synchronization while a smooth curve will wait for an oncoming cars synchronization to indicate that the road ahead is actually in a new heading unless sufficient elapsed time makes it clear the car is on a new course. The protocol will give benefit to the north on a 45 degree North/East heading and to the south on a 135-degree heading. GPS location and route recognition can also be used to set synchronization protocols for opposing vehicles. In one embodiment, the communication between vehicles for synchronization is effected through the headlamps themselves either through modulations in visible light LEDs of the digital headlight itself or with LEDs, radio or infrared emitters dedicated for the purpose **173**. Detectors **174** on the vehicle, pick up the signal and signal-processing equipment passes the information on to the controlling unit **175**.

Glare attenuating elements can be placed over the mirror surfaces or the side windows where the glare from the side mirrors passes. Thus not only the glare from oncoming headlights through the windshield is blocked but also glaring beams emanating from following vehicles, reflected off the rear and side view mirrors is controlled. To eliminate glare off the mirror **176** from reaching the driver's eyes from the side mirrors **177**, a pulsed blocking screen or film **178** is placed on the driver facing side of the mirror's the reflecting surface. Similarly a rearview mirror **179** is embodied with a pulsed blocking screen or film. The timing of the modes in this instance is such that the light-attenuating mode occurs at the same time as the glaring or high beam headlamp mode since all cars in the same direction are in glaring mode at the same instant. All mirrors are synchronized to block the headlight glare coming from the rear which are on at the same synchronization time as that of the first lead vehicle in the traffic train.

In another embodiment additional information used to control the headlight aiming can come from analysis of the driver's eye movement and gaze. The headlight aiming system obtains information from a driver eye tracking system concerning the driver's gaze (i.e. what the driver is looking at). Analysis of saccade can be used to instantaneously predict where the driver will end up looking and the headlight intensity in that aiming changed to illuminate the area where the driver wishes to see in advance of the driver's re-accommodation. A machine vision system using pattern recognition and other object identification techniques to discern eye gaze direction, is contrived of the camera **316** with a view of the driver's eyes, infrared emitters **317** and the computer logic system **311**. The data obtained is analyzed according to eye tracking methods and algorithms known in the art of in a computer routine **7**A to adjust the light aimings of the headlamps according to the drivers gaze at required intensities. The allowed intensities at any aiming take glare considerations into account so as not to cause offending glare. In another embodiment an outward and inward facing camera **316** is used to acquire both images of the scene ahead and the driver's gaze and using both sets of data adjust the headlamp illumination.

Accordingly it has been illustrated in the streetlight and headlamp application the benefit of a multiple-light source illuminating device. The flexible characteristics of the DLF allow for spatial variations of the intensity and spectral power distribution of the light over the area covered. When the element of variation of intensity and SPD with time over the area covered is introduced another dimension of flexibility is introduced. These properties are unique to the DLF and allow them to deal with dynamic lighting situations in a way not afforded by prior-art lighting devices. When combined with devices capable of detection changes in the surrounding environment the flexible DLF is capable of changing the illumination so as to provide the optimal lighting solution in real-time.

FIG. **17** illustrates a power supply circuit used on a DLF such as the Surface or Railing Mount Discrete **66** or Distributed 70 Digital Lighting Fixture of FIGS. **4** and **5**. The circuit controls current and illustrates the use of two disparate LED sets one red colored with specific voltage and current characteristics and the other green colored with its own voltage characteristics. When operated in this quanta and regime of voltage and current the combined output light is whitish in color according to the earlier teachings of this disclosure.

New Preferred and Additional Embodiments

Referring now to the invention in more detail, in FIG. **18**A there is shown an illuminating or irradiating device which is capable of being adjusted in situ to match the radiation output with the actual illuminating requirements of the surround where the lighting fixture has been installed. As an example, the device is a lighting fixture and the installation is in a chemical processing plant which is an open facility with piping and vessels placed in the structure with walkways, floors and stairs made of metal grating. The walkways, vessels, machinery and piping needs to be illuminated at night by lighting fixtures placed on the structural support uprights along the walkways. In this lighting application example the walkways are at the exterior edge of the structure with the piping and machinery towards the interior. Beyond the walkway safety fence there is no structure and no need for illumination. The spatial light distribution pattern of the lighting fixture shown in FIG. **18**A can be arranged so as to illuminate inwards towards the vessels, machinery and piping as well as downward along the walkways and stairs but not outward into free space.

The lighting fixture **410** is comprised of light sources **411**. The multiple light sources are referred to as LEDs, Light Emitting Diodes which is but one type of exemplary light sources used herein. Light sources referred to in this disclosure include any of a wide range of visible and non-visible electromagnetic radiation emitting or generating devices formed from organic or inorganic semiconductor materials such as LEDs, organic light emitting diodes, OLEDs and all gaseous high and low intensity discharge lamps, incandescent filament and other solid state light sources. The light sources **411** shown in FIGS. **18**A and **18**B have means to be coupled with apparatus for modifying the light output of LED chips or arrays of chips **412** such as a reflector **413** which yields a symmetric light distribution or an asymmetric reflector **414** which yields a substantially asymmetric light distribution. An optical lens or light guide **415**, or other refractive or diffractive device may be used to modify the light output as well as phosphors or filters within the light guide **415** which may be used to add or filter out certain wavelengths. The spatial light distribution of the light source refers to the luminous flux emanating from the light source **411** at various candle power intensities as a function of the angle. The light source **411** has a characteristic angular light distribution **416** also called herein beam spread and when installed on a lighting fixture attached to the building, object therein or lighting pole with a specific orientation in the surrounding living space, the beam axis **417** will have a particular aiming towards surfaces within the living space and therefore the light source will illuminate only the specific surfaces it is intended to fall upon. In an embodiment of the invention a light source module **411** is comprised of the one or more LED chip **412**, optical modifying device **413**, **414**, or **415**, a heat dissipative element **418** such as a heat sink and a physical and/or electrical connecting element for the LED chip **412** such as a printed circuit board **419**. In one embodiment a very narrow beam laser LED is mounted in the array of chips **412** such that it shines along the optical axis of the light module **411**. In an embodiment of the LED the beam spread has been determined on the die level without the need for additional optical modifying devices as part of the light module **411**.

A preferred embodiment of the invention is a lighting fixture comprised of many light sources of which some or all can be separately aimed and powered so as to illuminate areas, surfaces or objects in a room in a most correct, efficient and comfortable manner or for a desired lighting effect. The overall luminaire **410** spatial light distribution at various angles is comprised of that of the individual light sources. Thus when the multiplicity of light sources having their respective light distribution patterns, which are substantially directional and subtend lesser angles than those of the overall light distribution pattern are mounted and arranged on the lighting fixture structure their respective directional light distributions combine to form a wider overall light fixture distribution pattern. The overall distribution pattern is efficiently formed directly by the multiplicity of light sources without recourse to inefficient reflectors or refractors. Using a goniophotometer to measure over space the emanating light intensity in the various directions one obtains the overall spatial light distribution pattern of the luminaire **410**.

Using commercially available LEDs such as the Artavi 10° product from Illumitex which offers 90% of the light output in 10 degrees of the beam is possible. Even more

well controlled light distribution patterns with minimal spill light. Thus the Coefficient of Utilization (CU) or the utilization factor of the luminaire is high. That is, the ratio of the luminous flux (lumens) from a luminaire received on the work-plane to the lumens emitted by all the luminaire's light sources alone. The Illumitex LED package emits light in a uniform, highly-precise beam directly from the source. The result is that with die-level optical integration, the need for cumbersome and inefficient secondary optics to control light is obviated. Using well defined light beams to illuminate the area allows for the floor surface in the distant corners of a square room to have the same illuminance as the floor at the nadir, directly beneath the luminaire. This results in high uniformity which is a measure of variation of illuminance over a given plane, expressed as either the ratio of the minimum to the maximum illuminance or the ratio of the minimum to the average illuminance and a measure of the energy efficiency of the luminaire system.

In order to alter the spatial light distribution, the lighting fixture **410** has apparatus such as joints and flexible electrical connections giving it the ability to morph or change shape. That is, by the alteration of fixture geometry, moving structures or arms on which the light sources are mounted or by changing the LEDs' refractor or reflector geometry, the direction of the light emanating from groups or even individual light sources is modified so as to generate an overall site specific light distribution pattern. For example LEDs are mounted on moveable luminaire structural elements such as the end of posts, on bars or curved arms which can be adjusted to provide various symmetrical and asymmetrical illumination patterns as the installation requires. In the lighting fixture **410** the arms, such as arm **420** has apparatus to swivel around the central support post **421**. In an embodiment of the invention control electronics **422** have electronic means and circuitry configured to provide different power levels to LEDs or groups of LEDs such that the light intensity in any given direction and angular aiming may be varied as needed. In an embodiment of the invention the power supply and control electronics **422** are further defined to provide power only in the amount needed using a logical controller **428**. Controller **428** performance can be further enabled with sensor **429** providing information about the surroundings. The resulting light fixture embodiment described is thus a Field Adjustable Multiple-light-source Luminaire or FAML.

Thus in FIG. **18**A the beam spread **423** of LED **411** differs from the beam spread **424** of a LED light source **425** which may have a wider area from which the light exits so that its higher angled light output will not be as bright so as not to cause glare. An accessory reflector **426** may be used to shield from glaring rays. The method disclosed for reducing the glare from concentrated high luminance light sources is the use of light guides to reduce the luminous emmitance or luminance of a very bright LED. Light guides using the principle of total internal reflection redirect the light. They may in addition be used to increase the area from which the light flux is exiting and thus reduce the luminance or luminosity of the light source.

FIG. **19** shows a light guide which can be used to redirect the light from a light source and/or increase the area from which the light is exiting in order to reduce the apparent brightness. The light guide is constructed of a transparent material with an index of refraction greater than that of air. The light guide **430** will accept light rays emanating at large angles away from the beam axis and bend the rays to smaller angles from the axis thus producing a narrow beam. Light produced by the LED **412** at various angles enters the aperture **431**. The light then bends as total internal reflection contains it within the walls of the curved light guide and exits from the light guide at surface **432** with a different aiming. More than one light guide can be used and when stacked light exiting the light source at different angle can be directed outwards at different angles or the same angle. Light guide assembly **433** is shown with two light guides stacked but many similar or different beam modifying characteristic light guides can be stacked for a unique total light distribution resulting from the source. Thus in FIG. **18**B the optical device **415** can be a light guide assembly **433** as shown in FIG. **19** which has been added over a light source in FIG. **18**A aimed at a potentially glaring angle as shown covered by the light guide assembly **433**. The exit surface **432** may be a lens, a Fresnel lens or microlens whose optical features enable precise control of uniformity, exit angle and beam spread. In addition any of the surfaces may be covered with optical substrate or films to reduce light loss on entry or exit, frustrate the total internal reflection or filter or control the light. Light guides may also be asymmetrical.

In an alternate embodiment when using a single light source in a FAML yet an asymmetric spatial light distribution is desired, light guide assembly **434** made of light guide segments **435** is designed take light from the single light source and spatially differentiate its delivery to different parts of a room. For example, if the light fixture light source is located on the ceiling in the center of a square room and the assembly **434** is turned over so the light exits downward; then when the light exits the surface **436** with a Lambertian distribution and the segments are aimed in the direction of the corners of the room, a substantially homogeneous illumination can be obtained on a work plane near the floor in the square room. More than one segment of assembly **434** can be stacked and light guides with different light exiting directions can take the light of one light source and symmetrically or asymmetrically distribute over an area. Combined with reflective control elements **437** added within, upon the surface or external to the light guide further light control can be achieved.

While light guides are known for their ability to carry and redirect light, in this disclosure another novel embodiment of a light guide used as a light control device is its use to increase the area from which the light from the LED is exiting from thus reducing the light source luminance or glare. In an embodiment where the inlet aperture **431** cross section is small and the cross section of the light guide exit surface **432** is large there will be a significant reduction in the light source luminance and it will appear less bright and cause less glare to persons viewing it. Thus while persons in a room would find high brightness LEDs disturbing it is possible to add optical devices that while maintaining the directionality of the illuminating beams spreads them over a larger area thus reducing the luminous emmitance.

The Spectral Power Distribution of the luminaire refers to the distribution of light energy emitted by the light source arranged in order of wavelengths. In an embodiment of the invention the LED chip **412** is made of many separated LED chips or LED array. The array of semiconductor LED chips or dies **412** are of the same material and have a similar wavelength or are of different composition and produce a variety of wavelengths. In an embodiment the controlling power circuitry **428** is connected independently to each chip. The result of using differentiated composition chips **412** or phosphors with them is that the light output is a mix a various wavelengths of light and therefore of variable chromacity. Thus a warm color temperature of lighting can be produced as well as a cool daylight illuminative. The

when the light sources that make up a light module **411** are not all producing the same color spectrum or wavelength, the luminaire's chromaticity, spectral power distribution or spectral light distribution is alterable by the controller **428** via driver **422** energizing to a greater or lesser degree the individual light sources. These light sources may be substantially monochromatic or wide spectrum with different wide SPDs and monochromatics complementing each other. Using the principles of additive color mixing of light sources to control the change in chromacity via the differentiated powering of coincidentally aimed light sources, the luminaire produces a unique spectral light distribution having a certain color temperature and/or color rendering index of light at all or any particular aiming.

For example the curvilinear light guide **430** can be used to combine different colored LED chips **412**. Thus if 3 different colored LEDs were stacked and their light entered into one or more light guides the light guides will re-orient the light and aim them in the same direction whereupon they will mix. The mixed light when falling upon a surface and reflected to a person's eye will generate a uniquely observed color lighting effect. When phosphors are added to the light guide material other chromaticity may be generated. Thus a blue LED could generate one color temperature with one light guide and another color temperature in another light guide. If the guides are co-directional the colors will be mixed. Physical movement of the inlet aperture from one light guide of particular phosphors to another would then serve as a way of changing the correlated color temperature, CCT and/or color rendering index, CRI of a light source. Thus an active way of controlling the spatial and spectral output of the LED light source **411** is to reposition the light guide apparatus **433** or **434** thus changing the angular or spectral characteristic of the light modification.

Individual bars or arms **420** by their structural geometry determine the aimings of the light sources mounted on them. Thus using Lambert's cosine law and the inverse square law the arm geometry is designed such that more luminous flux can be directed to surfaces further away or surfaces at greater angles to the incident light to achieve a more homogenous light distribution. In addition when mounted in a living space the arm **420** can be rotated into a better aiming in order to optimally illuminate the area. Thus as a principle teaching of this invention the light sources attached to the arms have already been given the capability of generating a unique spatial distribution pattern in the factory set format. Most importantly, this preset distribution carries though to the homogeneous illuminance of room surfaces even after specific installation adjustment requirements have been made.

After adjustment the position of the arm can be input into the controller **428** or the camera **429** can be used to determine the lighting effects produced by the new arm arrangement. This calibration is accomplished by energizing a light source or array of light sources and reading the with the camera sensor array the luminance values off the surface. Comparing the new results with prior control luminance values at known power settings the present luminaire configuration is determined. A reference sheet of known reflectance is placed on surfaces to aid in the re-calibration. Alternately, the prior stored reference luminance values are for a number of surfaces of different reflectivities allowing the controller to guess from the surface at hand which reflectance model is a best fit. The data stored in the controller **422** can now be used for applying recommended lighting practice to specific lighting application or lighting tasks that luminaire is called on to perform. Herein this disclosure, a logical controller executes instruction sets based best lighting practices as recommended by lighting engineers and published in handbooks such as the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America IESNA and standards such as ANSI or CIE. The latest by the IESNA is the 10^{th} edition ISBN-13: 9780879952419, Publisher: Illuminating Engineering Society of North America that has numerous recommendations and best practice standards specifically related to LED lighting. The specific location lighting task information or programming may be manually input to the luminaire controller via an input device such as a keypad or be remote input controller using infra-red communications or other wireless device using a communications system such as, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth™ etc communicated via a computer or smart-phone or via a speaker microphone system. To determine lighting requirements in an area based on usage and characteristics of the users, the controller uses a speaker to communicate queries from a lighting specification questionnaire and receives audio response processed by a voice recognition software application as input for the purpose running the lighting design algorithms.

FIG. **20**A is a perspective view of an embodiment of a modular industrial lighting fixture with the addition of another adjustable arm **420** where the same LED driver electronics **422** are capable of powering additional arms when added or not powering them when they are subtracted such as in FIG. **20**B. The arms **420** are rotatable so that they may be concentrated at a specific aiming so as to produce higher illumination intensity in a specific area. In an alternative embodiment the driver electronics are modular in concert with the light source arms **420** such that when an additional arm is added an additional plug and play driver module is added as well with full communications and hookup capability to the logical controller **428**.

An example using a FAML in an industrial, commercial or house lighting application may be a hallway lighting function. An embodiment of an asymmetrical lighting fixture shown in FIG. **20**B with two arms **420** at 180 degrees with light source modules **411** laid out on the arms at higher angles to illuminate along the hallway will do a more economical job of illuminating then would the four armed symmetrical luminaire of FIG. **20**A. The light sources illuminating the hallway at higher angles from the nadir may have large areas to reduce the luminous emmitance to comfortable, non-glaring levels using optical light guides such as **430** to increase area while maintaining directionality. When the camera sensor element **429** detects people entering the hallway, the logical controller **428** increases the power driving the LEDs and the lighting intensity is increased from zero power or some low level of lighting sufficient for orientation purposes to full level. After the person has passed under the luminaire the LEDs on the approach side can already be dimmed again saving power. It is to be understood that the luminaire embodiment of FIG. **20**B is only showing the practical operational elements. Obviously, when used as a home hallway lighting fixture additional aesthetic elements can be added to improve the fixtures artistic appeal.

In an embodiment of this invention the adjustments to the light output distribution, intensity and chromacity are made automatically by the logical controller **428** operating per programmed instruction sets based on data supplied by sensors regarding living space geometry, environment and contents including living beings. Such sensors **429** use sound or electromagnetic radiation to measure distances to surfaces within the intended design illumination space of the

lighting fixture. An embodiment of the invention uses as a sensor an electronic camera with a lens **427** allowing it to view the surroundings. Natural light sources or light sources on the luminaire firing at known timings and chromacity can be used with the sensors **429** and logical controller **428** to determine distances, movement, reflectance, surface colors and other information about the surroundings during set up and in real time. The camera chip transfers the image information to the logical controller. Using real time image processing methodologies with image and scene recognition technology known in the art, room or outdoor area elements, objects and people are identified. Using face recognition techniques an individual may be identified and personal lighting preferences or functions can be provided by the luminaire. The controller being programmed to illuminate people, objects and surfaces according to best lighting practice or user preferences then manipulates fixture elements to adjust the lighting to meet the standards or personal preferences. In addition the computer vision can recognize the visual task being performed. The logical controller **428** then uses control of the power signal to the LED to provide recommended practice light intensities.

Light entering the digital camera **429** through its lens **427** is converted into electric signals by a CCD or CMOS image sensor. The lens can be an optical lens or a wide angle lens or a Fresnel lens giving the sensor array a view of the area illuminated by the lighting fixture or a wider area covered by a group of lighting fixtures under control of the logical controller. More than one camera sensor **429** with different areas of coverage can be used if more accuracy is required for image processing. The processor based control system for illumination has stored data and programs for driving the LEDs at the correct levels in order illuminate according to recommended lighting practice and stored algorithms which it uses to process pattern recognition, image recognition and other computer vision methodologies known in the art to recognize a particular object, surface or individual as well as distances to surfaces, their color, reflectance and the geometry of the environmental surround. The same image recognition camera may be used as the luminance meter or a separate light sensor may be employed. A further capability of the digital lighting fixture using image recognition methodology known in the art that it can recognize the individuals and provide personal preference lighting conditions or determine the optimal lighting parameters as required by their age. A processor based control system for illumination having stored data and algorithms which uses image recognition algorithms to recognize a particular individual. Using image recognition algorithms and artificial intelligence techniques known in the art, based on the appearance and movements of the occupants, the camera vision system will automatically guess their age and sex. The processor runs the computer vision routines to determine an occupants age or sex and sends instruction to a building's utility devices to provide individualized services such as heating and lighting on basis of age or sex.

The personalized control of the illuminating device or other appliances in communication with the controller can be effected by using a brain—computer interface, (BCI, often called a mind-machine interface (MMI), or sometimes called a direct neural interface or a brain—machine interface (BMI). Using apparatus to read brain activity, a direct communication pathway between the brain and the external device can be effected. The BCI can be combined with the computer vision system having knowledge of the surround to help the controller relate the brain activity to the visual aid required to carry out the desired function. For example in an automotive application the brain activity related to eye saccade can replace eye gaze tracking in knowing where the eye desires to see next and illumination can be provided on time, in advance of the visual task to be performed next.

The sensor **429** can be an LSI chip enabling high-speed processing of the generated image data by a digital image processor function within the logical controller **428** using algorithms known in the art for motion, scene and/or face detection. From these signals the logical control affects lighting changes as needed to perform visual tasks or create ambiance. The sensor and transducer pack **429** is sensitive to a wide range of electromagnetic or sonic pressure variations and has means for determining luminance, temperature and humidity. The logical controller **428** having communications capability can transfer information gained from the sensor pack **429** to other home automation networks or it can supply information to other home heating, cooling, security, lighting and host of other appliances. With a view of the front door the luminaire sensor can serve data to the home automation network on whether someone has entered of left the house.

In a preferred embodiment of this invention the lighting fixture is equipped with a camera vision system comprised of the digital camera **429** and logical controller **428** having computer algorithms for performing computer vision and has the capability of identifying the eyes of occupants in a room (this is similar to present day face detect mode used in digital camera technology such as a Canon PowerShot SD900, where the processor face recognition identifies the triangle of two eyes and a nose and focuses automatically). The camera vision system is capable of detecting glare causing visual discomfort on the eyes of room occupants caused by the lighting fixture and the logical controller will accordingly reduce the intensity of the illumination reaching the eyes from the responsible light source. The camera vision system can detect the glare by assessing the amount of light reflected back to the camera from the eyes of room occupants and determining on the basis of a scale, such as the de Boer rating scale for discomfort glare, whether or not glare is occurring. Alternatively the logical controller **428** upon detecting eyes will set the light source intensity shining in the direction of the eyes to a level that will not cause glare.

In addition the camera vision system **428** will prevent the lighting fixture **410** from producing veiling reflections on objects such as glossy magazines or computer screens. Using machine vision technology known in the art such as neural networks training and other pattern recognition techniques the vision system has sensor, algorithmic and computational means for identifying devices or objects. Using lookup tables to identify a possible veiling glare situation in the users field of view the logical controller **428** adjusts the lighting by providing illumination from a different angle such as beaming light off the ceiling in place of direct lighting and/or altering the intensity of the direct lighting.

Actual vision and perception is not only a function of the illuminance falling on the object being observed but also of the luminance of surfaces in the surround, spectral distributions of the object and background and the general illuminance level to which the eye has adapted. Veiling luminance and veiling reflections may even be as interfering so as to disturb the ability to see. Described is a method of using the an embodiment of multiple light source lighting fixture of the present invention with finely controlled light delivery to assist people to better see objects or carry out visual tasks such as reading. The method comprises altering the intensity and/or color of the illumination delivered to the task versus other surfaces in the visual surround (that is, the eye in the

viewer's field of view) such that the luminance of the object, the luminance of the background, the contrast and the veiling reflections are controlled so as to produce optimal vision conditions. To accomplish the spatially differentiated light delivery to the object of the visual task such as a book or computer screen the light sources to produce task lighting have multiple, narrow beams with minimal spill light. The limited coverage area of each beam and sharp cutoff is such that the lighting fixture controller can target a book while not substantially illuminating the desk. Other light sources illuminate the desk and other surfaces in the visual surround at an optimal background level luminance. The background level is determined by factors such as whether it is an office environment where others are present and a dark office is unpleasant or if the reading is at home and a lower background can be tolerated.

With the eye recognition capability the lighting fixture can, irrespective of the glare consideration, lower the illumination in areas where eyes are not looking thus saving power. Thus as in the FIG. **20**B hallway lighting application the logical controller upon identifying the occupant's eyes can illuminate at higher intensity the areas forward of the occupant in their field of view but limit light rays to below the eye level and dim the areas not in the visual path of the occupant. The same capability for dimming is available in many other lighting applications such as in other rooms in a house, warehouses, stores, factories as well as outdoors. In sports lighting glare can be eliminated by the controller **428** following the ball and calculating which light sources **411** are adding to vision and those which are detracting and reducing the intensity of those detracting. Thus the lighting fixture **410** provides illumination in real time only where people need it to carry out visual tasks while the illumination in other areas is off or dimmed to comfortable or aesthetic lighting levels.

An alternate embodiment of the FIG. **20**B fixture used in a highway lighting fixture application having a camera vision system has controllable light distribution and logical means for providing illumination based on the vehicle's position in relation to the lighting fixture **410**. In low traffic conditions in order to save energy used for lighting, the controller **428** using stored algorithms increases illumination with the approach of a vehicle and changes the beam cut-off levels as the automobile advances towards the lighting fixture to eliminate glare from the driver's eyes. It then dims the lighting after the vehicle has passed and is no longer useful. When multiple vehicles are presents the operating regime changes to illumination from the adjacent luminaire located behind the vehicles. By using communication between the luminaires **410** the optimal lighting regime is coordinated between them.

In a preferred embodiment the illumination device **410** of FIG. **18** with computer vision capability, also having means for communications with other devices and human factors engineering algorithms that allows it to predict in certain situations what a room occupant is interested in doing, has wired or wireless electronic communications apparatus for communicating the information it obtained via the camera for actuating or closing other devices. For example a person sitting down in front of the TV can have the TV turned on automatically and have heating concentrated on that area of the house. The camera based lighting system via a central logical control unit or the home computer inputs data on the house occupants' whereabouts and aids in the control of house lighting and heating and cooling. Thus the lighting fixture **410** communicates data and integrates with intelligent home automation systems as 1) it provides an ideal location for the sensors which includes any of sensors **429** for: temperature, humidity, motion and artificial vision and 2) the smart illuminating device **410**, itself which has a logical controller **428** capable of communicating with and being controlled by the automated home network.

The lighting fixture being the world's most ubiquitous device serves as the ideal platform for simple and intelligent camera vision systems for use in home, commercial, outdoor and industrial facilities control systems to the end of surveillance, control of the use of energy and supplying people with sound, lighting, heating, cooling and fragrance. A lighting fixture is almost always installed in any living space, from work spaces to entertainment spaces and an infrastructure of power lines and often data lines are already installed to them. Thus, a lighting fixture is ideal as a platform for sensors, transducers and detectors. It is also ideal as a platform for delivering lighting, sound, radiated heating and the dispersion of fragrance. For example a multiply placed speaker sound system for providing a listening experience upon receiving from the camera's information on the users' whereabouts can better tailor the sound delivery based on their location as in known in the art thus enhancing the sound experience. Computer recognition of the person/s in the room can call up from memory the users individuals listening and sound setting preferences. A fragrance system will provide aroma based on room occupancy and location if there is apparatus in the fragrance system for delivering fragrance to separate areas of the room. Again here a computer recognition of the individual can tailor the type of fragrance.

In an automated embodiment of the invention the light sources **411** and **425** are mounted on moveable elements **420** having actuators or motors that are controlled by the logical controller. The automatic mechanization of light source supporting fixture parts allows for the direction of the light output to be altered by the logical controller thus enabling the luminaire to perform better in the specific lighting application where the fixture **410** has been installed. This may be a onetime rearrangement of the light source aimings or may be performed in real time as the lighting requirements in the living space change. Similarly, based on changed parameters in the surrounding, the logical controller **428** adjusts as required the light intensity in any direction and/or the chromacity. Thus hereby we have demonstrated the systems unique lighting agility and energy saving capacity where the controller **428** can affect a dimming function based on factors in the surrounding such as the real-time sunlight contribution within parts of its coverage area, the amount of people in the room or the density and positions of cars on a highway.

FIG. **21** is an alternative embodiment of a field adjustable multiple light source lighting fixture **440** with light source modules arranged in a substantially linear form. Thus light source module **441** may be aimed towards the nadir while light source module **442** is aimed sideways to illuminate a different area off to the left. Light source module **443** is aimed at a higher angle from the nadir and illuminates a third area. The modules are connected mechanically and electrically to each other and to the power supply **444** and logical controller **445**. A different configuration is affected by changing the angle between modules on joint **446** which is capable of bending in the x and/or y direction. Detents and/or markings are provided on the joints **446** indicating different angular settings. Thus instructions for each joint's **446** setting can be given to the homeowner or lighting fixture installer by a lighting design computer program known in the art. The light sources are specified and the room dimen-

sions are entered into the program and the light source aiming angles are specified for the FAML **440**. Whereas, in a special aiming configuration with light sources directed at different aimings, an even or homogeneous light distribution will be affected over the area under the fixture, the light fixture can be rearranged so that all the light sources are aimed in the same direction and thus a distribution similar to that of a single light module's own spatial light distribution will be obtained. Thus, if the light module light distribution is narrow, and they are all aimed in the same direction a spot light distribution will be obtained from the fixture **440**.

Alternatively the LEDs can all be aimed at the ceiling or objects on the wall for an indirect lighting effect or soffit lighting effect. Alternately, some LEDs can be aimed in the same direction and others at differentiated aimings obtaining both a spot and flood light distribution from fixture **440**. Light source modules can be added to the chain or detracted depending on the lighting application. In addition the light source modules can be enclosed in an aesthetic enclosure **447** hiding the actual light source modules. As shown in FIGS. **18** and **20**, the embodiments are depicted in their practical light engine form with the skeletal light source support structure. It is clarified that the skeletal support structures in the luminaire embodiments presented may be embellished with outer enclosures of a more aesthetic nature. The only requirement is that the outer structure does not interfere substantially with the light and heat transfer from the light engine outwards. Thus the disclosure has shown a FAML that can be agile in meeting differing illumination requirements, aesthetic and energy efficient in providing illumination in a specific lighting application.

The unique approach of this multiple light source luminaire invention over previous art luminaires is that in prior art, even when many LED sources are used the spatial light intensity distribution output of the luminaire is determined by the primary or secondary optics on the light source. Whatever light distribution there is emanating from the light source that is the light distribution of the luminaire. In this invention the overall light distribution of a single luminaire is comprised of many smaller light distribution patterns. It could be argued that a track lighting luminaire with its multiple light sources is such a fixture. As opposed to a dispersed track lighting luminaire used to spot light specific areas spread in a room the FALM is a centralized, integral lighting unit with both general area lighting and spot lighting functionality under the uniting structural, logical control and electronic circuitry of the luminaire.

FIG. **22** is a block diagram of the functional elements comprising adjustable LED luminaires **450** disclosed in this invention. The block diagram illustrates the power and communication connections between the elements. The power source **451** can be electrical utility power or battery power which is altered in a power conditioning element **452** such that it may operate the transducer and sensors pack **453** and other electricity users such as the logical controller **454** and LED drivers **456**. The logical controller **454** receives information from the input communications and sensors **453** and provides instructions to the power controls **455** and LED drivers **456** so as to drive the LEDs **457** as required by the lighting application. To alter intensity or chromacity of the light output by LED chip arrays **457** the logical controller uses techniques such as multiplexing of the power signal going to the light sources or pulse width modulation thereof. In another embodiment, the light module **411** includes control electronics which divides power up between the LED chips **412** according to instruction signals received from the central controller **428**. Thus the light module **411** receives from the central control electronics both a power and control signal. The control signal may be modulations on the power signal. The light module controller then re-divides the power to the individual LED chips **412** as required to obtain light intensity and chromacity. To lengthen the times between the power signals to the light module, the light module **411** may be equipped with an energy storage means such as a capacitor or battery.

A unique feature of the adjustable lighting fixture is that extra lighting element modules **457**, i.e. those not needed in a specific application can be deactivated. Thus if an arm **420** is removed, the corresponding LED driver circuit **456** can be deactivated. In a modularly built system the customer can purchase light source modules for the application such as four light source modules **457** for symmetric illumination as in fixture **410** or just 2 modules for a two arm **420** hallway light as in FIG. **20**B. The electronic circuitry allows for LED drivers **456** to be added as needed and thus the customer would purchase the matching LED driver circuitry **456** for the hallway light configuration.

In a preferred embodiment the LED light fixture system is provided with mechanical means **458** for changing the structural shape which affects the direction of the illumination produced by the LED module **457**. By re-aiming the light sources a new fixture **450** light distribution pattern is obtained. The feedback of the new position of joint **446** is accomplished by input from a position sensor at joint **446** which is part of the sensor pack. In a manually adjusted system joint **446** is provided with markings and/or detents for vertical and horizontal angular positions such that instructions given to the user for aiming the light sources are in understandable terms. The logical controller **454** uses the new geometric data to recalculate the light distribution. Alternately, or in addition to, the camera acting as a light a sensor coupled with the logical controller's firing of the newly adjusted LED sources **457** at a known timing, obtains the new light distribution pattern. In addition results are corroborated with the position sensor data. The logical controller **454** with new knowledge of the light distribution calculates, using computer programs such as FIG. **23**, how to best provide required illumination based on algorithms run on the processor **454** pulling stored lookup-data from the data storage of **454** or received information via the communications device of **454**. The transducer sensor pack **453** is comprised of any of the following devices: an ultrasonic transducer and receiver, an electromagnetic radiation source and detector, including IR, UV, Light and Laser sources/detectors, a speaker and a microphone for audible output and reception among others. Thus, the intelligent light system **454** can receive voice input from the user which the logical controller equipped with voice recognition programs will interpret into commands and give feedback. The input to the fixture can be via a wired input device, voice recognition of commands similar to those used in computers and mobile phones, other noises such as clapping, a remote control device or wireless communication from a computer. Thus a user of the lighting can override lighting choices made by the logical controller and input their personal lighting preferences which if desired, are stored for the future. The logical controller is programmed to interpret the input signals into functions to be carried out by the FALM **450** in terms of spatial, spectral and intensity distributions of the light in space and in time.

FIG. **23** is an exemplary flow chart for a computer program run by the logical controller of the lighting fixtures disclosed in this invention to provide correct illumination. Based on information obtained by the sensors (for example,

input the logical controller **428** of light fixture **410** again shown in FIG. **22** as logical controller **454**, calculates and sends control signals to power controller **455** and LED drivers **456** to produce the optimal illumination for the visual tasks being performed by people within or adjacent to the area being illuminated. The computer routine first acquires information regarding the light distribution pattern of the luminaire in its present configuration. Using data from the initial calibration stored in data storage **454** and powering a LED **457** at a specific aiming, the digital camera light sensor array reads the luminance value returned by surfaces. The processor using the inverse square cosine law obtains the reflectance of those surfaces which are then registered in the data storage **454** for further use in determining spatial distribution of light flux from the luminaire after adjustment. Thus a feedback control routine is effected by the controller and sensor devices using the stored computer routines.

The logical controller **454** next determines the lighting environment in which the luminaire has been installed and area for which the luminaire is to provide illumination. If other intelligent luminaires are present, the communications program coordinates between them. If the neighboring luminaire is unintelligent, then the installer powers it on and off and the controller **454** records the differences in illumination due to its influence for future use. Using pattern recognition technology known in the art of machine and computer vision, the controller **454** identifies architectural features of the room such as windows and walls as well as furniture and appliances. Powering the LED light sources **457** or transducers **453** and reading the reflected signal captured by the sensors **453**, the logical controller **454** obtains a first guess result for the iterative process of customizing the luminaire for the installed location. Running algorithms, the processor **454** determines the luminance values obtained from the sensors **453** and compares with best practice lighting recommendations. If necessary, the logical controller corrects on its own the light source **457** aimings via control of joint **458** which is equipped with automatic means for movement. Alternately, via communication with other devices or people it relays the necessary angular setting information for them to carry out the adjustment. The controller next measures the obtained luminance and checks if the recommended or best practice luminance level has been reached. The customer may also receive a report of the measured luminances from the lighting fixture system **450** and input to the logical control the desired changes. Alternately, the customer based on their own or other users' visual experiences can input desired corrections to the logical controller **454** which then re-adjusts the light source aimings. If re-aiming the light sources **457** alone cannot solve the required illumination requirements the controller **454** determines and communicates the need for the installation of additional light sources or communicates which light sources are superfluous.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention the logical controller **454** receiving image input from the camera **453** and running pattern recognition software will identify what is the visual task a person is trying to perform. The computer routine receives images from the camera and by determining the proximity of persons to objects such as books, newspapers, computer screens, telephones, televisions, cereal bowls, a writing pad, etc that are recognized by the computer vision techniques predicts what visual task the user is trying to perform. The logical controller **454** then drives the light sources **457** according to recommended lighting practice levels stored in its data storage. In another preferred embodiment of the invention the user can command the logical controller as to the visual task being performed and the type of lighting desired such as "warm white" or "more light" and their preferred intensity level. The user input to the logical controller **454** may be thru a keyboard on the light fixture or via an electronic device in communication with the light fixture via the communications apparatus of **454** therein or audible or visual commands detected by the microphone or image sensor apparatus of the sensor pack **453**. Alternately, a smart mobile phone application with a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi communications capability serves as the remote controller and will handle the voice recognition, present a touchpad menu for control input or provide keyboard for command entry. If the logical controller makes an incorrect decision in the eyes of the user, the user can override the last change by a signal such as snapping ones fingers or voice command etc. Unique to this invention people are able to choose the lighting that suits them best and the fixture, having differentiated light delivery, can provide a first user with one type of chromacity and/or intensity and a second type for a different user in a different area.

The logical controller **454** provides its own feedback by checking in real time via the sensors **453** if the illumination provided by driving the light sources at the current setting is in accordance with recommended lighting levels and chromacity. In addition by using pattern recognition and knowing the location of the user's eyes the logical controller can determine if the illumination is causing glare discomfort or veiling reflections. The logical controller by comparing new images with previous images detects if there is a change in the lighting requirements. If changes have occurred, the illumination determining process of FIG. **23** is repeated and a new configuration of driver settings and/or light source aimings is obtained.

Yet another feature of the present invention logical controller and software is that the lighting fixture **450** has apparatus to check the illumination level of the lighting set-up upon installation and provide feedback so that manually made aimings are directed to obtain a desired illumination or luminance. The camera **453** serving as a light meter obtains luminance readings on surfaces in the living space. It inputs data to the controller **454** which provides readout either on a display on the FAML **450** or communicated to another device having a display. The installer using a calibrated reference reflective sheet of known color and reflectance values placed on surfaces at particular aimings will check if the desired illumination and chromacity is being provided. The reference sheets can also be used to calibrate the room surfaces for future camera sensor **453** readings by storing in **454** the actual surface readings vs. those of the reference sheet. Once the camera **453** is calibrated as to the reflectance and color of room surfaces the FAML **450**, in a servomechanism enabled embodiment, with automatically movable light sources **457**, will perform its own re-configuration to reach optimal light provision. The calibration is affected by using the camera array **453** to detect luminance as a measure of the lighting fixture instantaneous illuminance in that direction vs. the power level at which the light source is being driven. To calibrate the illumination system, the logical controller **454** can use a given LED installed on the fixture which serves as a light source standard when driven at known voltage and current. Alternately, an additional light sensor of superior accuracy stability is provided for in the sensor pack **453** and can be used to calibrate the camera sensor array.

In a preferred embodiment the control unit **454** is optionally outfitted with a photometer **453** which can be used to read the luminance of the room surfaces and transmit the data for use in the lighting program. FIG. **23** using the same

process a lighting designer uses to enter data to the lighting analysis programs the installer inputs to the controller as to the illuminance goals for each surface. The lighting program as known in the art then specifies the correct lighting levels, aimings and spectrum for the different locations and uses throughout the room. This is reversing the typical design process where the lighting fixtures performance is simulated on a computer and the results calculated. Here, the required illuminance results are known first and the fixture is then programmed to make them happen. The controller **454** uses its stored performance characteristics to determine the power supply to the light sources so that it provides the required intensities to obtain the required illuminance. The lighting calculations and programming of the power supply **456** of the light sources **457** is preferably performed in real time such that the sensor **453** detects the illuminance to corroborate the performance while the installer is still at the location. If the lighting is not to specification then the controller **454** readjusts the parameters so as to bring them in line. This trial and error process continues until the readings are within tolerance. The process is best carried out in the dark or when there is non-varying daylight. Alternately, the photometric reading sensors are on the luminaire and they are used to corroborate performance. Alternately, the process is automatic using feedback from the surroundings and pattern recognition to determine surroundings and applications.

A number of circuits in devices **452**, **455** and **456** are utilized to power equipment in the fixture **450** and carry out control. The power supply may be a constant voltage supply or current source. The control circuitry comprises feedback sensors **453** coupled to the logical controller **454** to detect light intensity and color spectrum of the radiation. Associated logic circuitry, responsive to the detected light intensity and color spectrum over the spatial distribution, controls the power delivered to the individual LED diodes, so as to provide a desired intensity distribution over space. In an example using a combination of different colored LEDs, the logic circuitry **454** is responsive to the detected color spectrum of the outputted light. It controls the driver **456** to selectively increase or decrease power to individual coincidentally directed light emitting diodes as is needed to obtain the desired color spectrum of the illumination as well as it luminous intensity.

FIG. **24** is a universal lighting fixture **470** comprised of a structure **471** with means for attaching mechanically and electrically to any of the elements selected from the group consisting of electric power conditioning apparatus, a logical controller with processing and storage capacity, light sources, radiation sources, transducers and sensors. The structure can be factory manufactured or come in a do-it-yourself DIY version. The lighting fixture has a geometrical shape calculated by the inverse square cosine law for set types of light pattern distributions. In one embodiment the structural shape of fixture **470** is such that an even, homogenous light distribution will be obtained on a work plane below when the Plug and Play light source modules **472** are connected. In a do-it-yourself lay-up-able embodiment of the luminaire **470**, the luminaire light source elements **472** are configured by the user in situ according to the illumination needs where the fixture **470** is hung. They may be reconfigured when the lighting needs changes such as when furniture is rearranged in the room. The lighting fixture structure **471** covered with removable facet covers **473**. Facet **474** has been opened exposing the receptacle **476** to accept additional light source module **477**. The receptacle **476** is provided with connective affixing means **478** for having light source module **477** attached to it both mechanically and electrically. Light source module **477** is also provided with a complementary connector element **479** which mates with connector **477**. Connector **478** is wired to a power conditioning and control elements provided with luminaire **470** as needed by the configuration. The additional light source module **477** with its characteristic beam spread **480** mounted on a opened facet **474** on the structure **471** is at a different aiming via the position on the luminaire **471** where it is being mounted. The light sources **477** have a characteristic beam spread **480** and optical axis **481**. The receptacle **476** allows for some rotation of the installed light source **477** on the X Y or Z axes. Thus when a number of light sources are laid up and aimed in the same direction they will add intensity to the light distribution in that direction and when added on the curved fixture **471** surface at different angles they will increase the coverage area of the lighting fixtures illumination. Markings are provided on the structure with the angle of the position thus the user following instructions can attach the light sources at angles which will yields an even light distribution up to the cutoff angle.

A lighting design computer program known in the art will simulate to the user what the light output will be from the luminaire as it is configured. A logical controller on the luminaire can determine from the plugged in light source units which have a identifying data chip **479** in the connector relaying what its light distribution is and communicates to a simulation program the present configuration aimings and light source characteristics. In addition a sensor **482** is provided on the luminaire. The camera like sensor **482** measures the resultant light output and relays those results to the simulation program. Thus the user can build a customized lighting fixture that ensures proper lighting intensity where needed and does not waste light where not needed. The plug and play light source characteristics are known to the controller and their operating characteristics may then be programmed via the lighting simulation program. Using the lighting simulation program, the employed element characteristics, now a part of the controllers feedback loop, are used to direct the user to rearrange the lighting modules to further refine the fixture's **470** light output.

The do-it-yourself lighting fixture **470** has special lighting fixture accessories that are attachable to the structure. Spot light module **482** with a narrow beam spread is an example of a special accessory. It can be a light source or a radiation source such as an Infra-Red heating source or a combined heat and light source. It is mounted on the fixture via swivel joint **483** which is manually positioned at an angle required for the illumination task. A special laser pointer LED **484** is provided in the center of the light source LED array **485** to facilitate exact aiming of the spot light. The lighting module **482** is provided with connection means to the power and control signals via the joint **483**. The module is also provided with cooling fins **486** to maintain optimal temperature for the LED sources. The swivel joint **483** can be a motorized joint with motion in two axes controlled by the logical controller. Thus the logical controller **454** in conjunction with the camera vision system **475** when identifying a person in need of spot lighting as per the computer program of FIG. **23** will pivot the spot light **482** so that it is aimed in the direction where the task lighting is required. At the same time the lighting fixture **470** will maintain general lighting at recommended levels over the rest of the room thus significantly saving energy.

In another embodiment one or more light sources, acting as a spot light **482** of limited beam angle from an automated

swivel joint. The controller **454** receiving input from the camera and using computational image recognition algorithms in a program as in FIG. **23** follows the person around the room providing them with higher intensity lighting for their visual tasks. Further image recognition capability which may also be complemented by video analytics technology where computer vision is used to filter and manage real time video for security and intelligent traffic monitoring, helping to recognize activities as they happen in real-time which enables the controller to determine any of the following: a change in the persons activity, in what direction the eyes may be directed, what objects the person is viewing and what visual task the person needs to perform. Based on that information the controller **454** powers the spot light sources **482** and general lighting sources **472** to provide the correct lighting for the specific visual task undertaken, be it reading a book or watching TV.

An irradiation device embodiment of this FAML invention can use the computer vision and aim-ability function to provide infrared heating to individuals in indoor and outdoor settings. The heat radiation sources can be infrared filament lamps or infrared LEDs in addition to other wavelengths. The irradiating devices **472** mounted on the irradiation fixture can provide general area heating or spot heating **482** to people or objects. Computer recognition of individuals is used to irradiate them as they move about the living space. Using face recognition algorithms and stored personal preferences from the data storage, the logical controller **454** will aim the heating rays specifically where on their body they prefer to be heated as well as in what amount and at what times. The camera **475** has sensors sensitive to infra-red wavelengths around 12 .mu.m (micrometers) radiated from people. The controller obtaining the information from the body temperature sensor will run algorithms to calculate radiation parameters and will control the irradiation in time and intensity on the individual to maintain comfortable heating per best practice standards, drawing on stored data of heating practices, or personally input preferences. People may be sensitive to radiation heating on certain parts of the body. For example heating on the head area causes some people discomfort. The camera and controller processor system can use image recognition to identify parts of the body and the controller can provide a different radiation level to the head vs. the rest of the body. Other people feel the cold in the legs etc. In addition the controller can obtain information on other environmental parameters such as the temperature, humidity etc which affect the heating regimen. Thus the camera sensor **475** is an energy saving sensor replacing the room heating thermostat used to maintain the entire room at a high ambient temperature with a more accurate and localized actual measure of the individual's temperature. The radiating fixture **470** will them provide localized heating on an as needed basis to maintain comfort. The FAML logical controller **454** runs the algorithms and provides spot heating only when necessary and in the right amount. Just as moveable head stage lighting follows the performer about the stage the camera/controller vision system follows the person around the room or outdoors and keeps them warm with an infra-red lamp **482**. It is to be understood that the irradiating source can be supplying UV radiation, visible light, or any other radiation for therapeutic, pleasure or manufacturing purposes such as UV, EB or heat curing adhesives etc.

In an embodiment of the FAML the infrared radiation sources are added to the light source and can work together when necessary to provide heat and light. Thus in a living room fixture where the house heating has been turned down to energy saving levels an individual can receive concentrated light for reading as well as concentrated beam of infrared heating.

FIG. **25**A and FIG. **25**B shows an embodiment of this invention for use indoors or outdoors the light source arrays are mounted at the end of rods extending from the light fixture housing containing the control equipment. In an example lighting application, the fixture **487** is located over a table in a living room. The rods **488** supporting the light source modules have means for re-positioning either manually or automatically. In a manual system, the user based on the future use of the luminaire, sets up the spatial light distribution to best meet the visual requirements of people within the living space by re-positioning the rods. In one embodiment, for set up purposes, a red laser pointer is built into each array as was laser **484** in FIG. **24**. Alternately, a laser pointer accessory is clipped onto the individual light module to assist in aiming. The user by trial and error using their own eyes as detectors or sensors **489** eventually reaches a functional light distribution with the lighting fixture for that specific installation. In an automatic system when the camera sensor **489** detects a person sitting at the table the automatic servos move the rods **488** so that the light output of many sources is aimed towards the table below producing high intensity task lighting as shown in FIG. **25**A. When a room occupant is seated on the couch in the living room and watching TV the lighting fixture structure is changed to the configuration of FIG. **25**B which offers general lighting at a lower intensity. The camera vision system will recognize a TV screen and the controller using the program of FIG. **23** will not illuminate light sources shining in the screen's direction that are aimed towards it at angles which would cause glare.

An outdoor FAML **487** equipped with camera vision capabilities for the detection and/or tracking of people, is another embodiment of this invention which has a number of improvements over present area illumination technology. The outdoor lighting fixture **487** is first configured to the geometrical peculiarities of the specific yard where it has been installed and is calibrated with the sensors **489** readings. If the area to be illuminated is rectangular with a narrow distance ahead of the fixture and a wide area of to the sides, the light sources mounted on the moveable arms are moved closer together in y axis while on the x axis the light source are distanced from each other and are at aimings angled higher to cover the extended width on the x axis. To compensate for the larger are the LEDs on the x axis are driven at higher power to cover for the larger area. Conversely for a square area the light sources are distributed evenly so as to illuminate on the intensity level set at the factory as in FIG. **25**B. If there is an area where high intensity task lighting is needed the luminaire is configured with multiple light sources coincidentally directed to intensely illuminate that area as in FIG. **25**A. The lighting level for security and orientation is usually low and when people arrive on the scene the light level increases. When people are present in the specific area where high intensity is needed for tasks the spot light function is engaged. If infrared lighting is need for the security camera then provision is made to have IR sources aimed at the specific areas of concern.

FIG. **26** is a perspective view of a lighting fixture embodiment **490** capable of producing both a differentiated spatial light intensity distribution as well as a spatially differentiated light spectrum distribution. The luminaire **490** has multiple light source modules **491**, **492** and **493** with each module comprised of more than one LED chip which can

be powered by the logical controller and control electronics **494** at differentiated power levels. LEDs are arranged in arrays of RGB (substantially red, green and blue color LEDs) or arrays with of any of ROYGBIV LEDs completing white LEDs to produce varieties of white light. The logical controller **494**, using algorithms based on the principles of additive color mixing of light sources to control the change in chromacity affects, via the differentiated powering of coincidentally aimed light sources, the production of a unique spectral light distribution having a certain color temperature and/or color rendering index of light. This may be accomplished at once for all light output from the luminaire **490** or any particular aiming **495**. The logical controller operates with data storage and program similar to the system shown in FIG. **22** and FIG. **23**.

Alternately, to vary the CCT or CRI, in place of an RGB or MCY (substantially magenta, cyan and yellow LED's) or some alternative LED colorimetry system, the luminaire is equipped with different types of phosphor based white light LEDs **491** of different color temperature, where one or the other is used for a specific lighting task. In another embodiment, a monochrome LED can be added to the white LED to adjust its color temperature or rendering shifting its CCT and/or CRI. In addition, the use of shorter wavelength LEDs with nano-dots or quantum dot optics such as those from QD Vision, whose Quantum Light™ optics and films improve the color gamut of LEDs as they absorb some of the cool, blue LED light and efficiently re-emit it as warm, red light. This balances the lighting color spectrum, creating a pleasing incandescent quality light yet at significantly higher efficiency. Thus the fixture **490**, in addition to having a controllable non-symmetric light intensity distribution in different directions also has a controlled spectral light distribution in different directions enabling a unique color rendering of one surface and a different color rendering of a second surface.

As an example of the luminaire's benefits and agility to provide correct lighting where it is needed at minimal energy consumption, an embodiment of the invention, a spatially and spectrally adjustable restaurant lighting fixture is presented in FIG. **26**. In a restaurant lighting application it would be beneficial for the customer experience if those dining, the food and ambience would all appear at their best. The problem is that even at high CRI, some color temperatures are better than others at making food appear more appetizing to customers than another. As the portions served under a single prior-art lighting fixture vary, some of them will not be shown in their best light. For example, light at 3500K-4100K helps accentuate the textures and colors of fish and white meat while the rosy hue of a 2250K light source will accentuate the color and juices of red meat. Thus it would be beneficial if the light which is illuminating the specific table setting can be varied in accordance with the food being served. The FAML with its capability of delivering spatially differentiated illumination will render each portion in its best light. Using programmed scene recognition algorithms, the luminaire's computer vision system comprised of the camera sensor **496** and logical controller **494** identifies the food on the plate, looks-up in storage the recommended CCT and powers each of the different colored LED chips aimed thereon at the correct power level in order to provide the optimal color illumination.

In addition the logical controller can determine on its own the preferential color of the illumination based on the reflections off of the food. The controller runs a computer routine where it rapidly varies the light spectrum to preset CCTs and/or CRIs shining on the food on the plate. The camera records the image at each preset and the logical controller **494** compares the image coloring with stored rules of recommended practice for color rendering and determines the best illumination color setting. The controller **494** resets the illumination characteristics until the next change on the table occurs. The recommended practice programmed into the controller is based on IESNA illuminance information or restaurant illumination as described in industry literature such as Successful Restaurant Design by Regina S. Baraban, Joseph F. Durocher John Wiley and Sons, 2001.

The lighting fixture **490** has means to illuminate separate portions at a table comprised of directable or aim-able lighting modules **491** etc which are on moveable structural parts **497**. The lighting fixture **490** also has computational means of providing the optimal color and intensity of light so as to render people, food, objects in their best light as well as to build a dining room ambience through lighting according to recommended practice or user preferences. The moveable structural bars **497** are manually positionable so as to aim the light sources towards the people, table and surrounding. In a preferred embodiment, the moveable structural parts **497** connected to the light modules are automatically moveable via actuator or servo motors controlled by the logical controller **494**.

We have described a system for improving the appearance of the food but the same system applies to making the customer appear at their best. In another fixture embodiment the intensity and chromacity of the lighting illuminating the customer is adjusted manually via input means or automatically via stored algorithms to suit the customer's preferences. The fixture **490** has separately amiable light sources such as LED module **492** to illuminate the food and light source **493** to illuminate the customer. The specific group of light sources for each task may be manually positioned or a camera vision system has algorithmic means to identify and track the position of people and objects and the logical controller has motion control means for re-aiming the light sources towards targeted elements and changing the power level to the LED chips.

In an automated embodiment, controller **494**, based on image recognition of images provided by camera sensor **496**, moves the powered structural parts **497** to re-aim the light sources on the food, table or those dining as needed. Thus as an example of the unique, differentiated lighting capability of the novel luminaire **490**, multiple light sources are used as follows; a number of wide angle light distribution light sources **491** are used to illuminate the table at a low 100 lux illuminance with a warm 3000K color temperature to build dining ambiance; while narrow beam, spot LED **492** illuminates the fish on the plate at 300 lux and 4000K CCT (in conjunction with ambient lighting LED **491**) to help accentuate the textures and colors of the fish; while the light module **493** is aimed at a diner with low enough luminous exitance so as not to cause glare but with a color spectrum that is complementary to that of general lighting module **491** such that it enhances the makeup and skin color of the customer showing them at their best. When the visual task of the customer reading the menu is recognized by the computer vision system, the logical controller **494** can increase the light module **491** output to 300 lux making the reading easier. The controller re-dims the light module **491** when the menu is recognized by the vision system **496** as being put away.

In an integrated restaurant illumination system embodiment, the customer will first try out the lighting in the rest room where they may apply makeup under a FAML luminaire having capability of producing light in a variety of

chromacities, which the customer can experiment while viewing themselves in a mirror. The rest-room lighting fixture has a readout or is equipped with communications means, as is the lighting fixture controller **494** with which it is in contact. Having discovered their CCT and/or CRI lighting preference, the customer uses an input means and communications means to set the lighting fixture **490** at the table to the same successful chromacity obtained in the restroom.

In another embodiment a lighting fixture on the wall or floor such as a torchiere or a ceiling mounted fixture serves as a light engine for the entire room replacing a number of lighting fixtures while increasing the efficiency and quality of the lighting. FIG. **27** is a perspective view of a FAML lighting fixture **500** capable of providing both general and task lighting. The fixture body **501** has power conditioning electronics and logical control electronics and has light sources mounted on curvilinear light bars **503** that are configurable. This geometry and configurability enables light source aimings that will provide a substantially homogeneous illumination on a work plane through the room in which it is installed. It will also offer customization of the illumination to the actual geometric and usage peculiarities of the living space where the fixture **500** has been installed. In addition the lighting fixture **500** is equipped with one or more spot lights **504** having a narrow light beam spread which are able to provide high intensity illumination over a small area. As opposed to general area lighting, the spot may provide task lighting. It is a principle of this invention that the fixture **500** provides as much light as is needed in the living space, no less and no more. Thus the LED powering circuitry as shown in FIG. **22** is configured such that each light source covering a different area is capable of being driven at a different power level. The differentiated electronic power supply is configured such that if a homogenous illuminance is required by recommend lighting practice within a living space, the illuminance in the area covered by higher angled light source **505** is at recommended level even if that area is at a greater distance and angle from the luminaire than an area illuminated by a second light source **502** as dictated by the inverse square cosine law. The adjustable lighting fixture structure is provided with moveable joints **506** which have means for being positioned at specific angles which are relatable to a lighting design software program such as those commercially available to lighting designers. The software can be run on the logical controller **501** or on a remote computer. When the light source module **502** etc light distributions and aimings are input into the lighting design software program along with the room dimensions and surface reflectance's, the illuminance within the room is calculated. The powering of the LED modules is then adjusted via controller electronics **501** to obtain the recommended practice illuminance.

Normally, a light fixture must be placed substantially above the area to be illuminated so as not to produce glare and veiling reflections. For example computer screens are to be protected from light rays at large angles from the nadir to prevent veiling reflections. In addition the illuminance of light rays at large angles from the nadir striking horizontal surfaces decreases as described by the cosine law. In addition, the quality of the lighting is a function of the balance of vertical as well as horizontal lumens illuminating an object. A tennis ball illuminated on top but not on the sides flying at 80 mph will be difficult to see. It is also important to provide illumination from multiple angles to prevent shadows that can be created by single lights. Thus, many lighting fixtures would be needed to illuminate a large room to insure the visual performance and comfort of its inhabitants. In an embodiment of the invention, a single light engine device for a room our outdoor location allows for the light to be generated in one place and then beamed from the concentrated light sources **504** at small angles of divergence to reflectors or refractors which redirect the light to the users in a localized area or to other reflectors so as to go around corners and illuminate areas not in the luminaire's direct line of sight. A single location for the light source simplifies the provision of power to the fixture. A builder doesn't need to run wiring all over the ceiling and not having an outlet box in the right place in a room or lot is no longer a problem. In addition a single location allows for greater investment in an efficient cooling system as well as for the removal of waste heat from an air conditioned environment and reduces installation and fixture costs. It also allows for greater investment in computer vision and logical controller apparatus enabling higher quality lighting at lower energy expenditures.

A necessary prerequisite for this remote lighting technology to be effective is the ability to generate concentrated beams of light with low divergence angles at high beam utilization. That is, 1) that most of the initial light generated gets out of the optical apparatus used to generate the tight beam and 2) most of the light flux is within the narrow beam with minimum spill outside the beam. A commercially available LED product such as the Artavi 10° product from Illumitex offers 90% of the light output in 10 degrees of the beam. The beam efficacy is above 80 lumen per watt proving that it is possible to generate well controlled light distribution patterns with minimal spill light. However, to reduce the size of the remote reflectors at the mounting heights and distances typically found in rooms, a 5 degree beam spread is even more attractive. Typically 3 meter distances are beyond the coverage of a comfortable cutoff home and office luminaires mounted at 2.7 meter ceiling height. Thus large room lighting needs would not be best met with a single light source due to the visual discomfort due to glare at higher angles of light emission. Therefore, it is highly beneficial to have an efficient manner of moving light in narrow beams of limited divergence over large distances to reduce the cost of lighting installations. LED optics as shown in FIG. **20** including a collimating lens for narrow beam generation are available with a light collection efficiency of >85%. Its function is based on the optical principle of total internal reflection, which contributes to the high efficiency of the optical system. Further measures can be taken to collect the 15% escaping light such as an encompassing reflector system.

FIG. **28** is a perspective view of satellite secondary light source which is a light modifying element capable of redirecting light from primary light sources such as lamps or the sun while not producing light on its own. In this embodiment the light engine **500** is equipped with light sources **504** capable of projecting at an exact aiming **508** high intensity, narrow light beams with minimal beam spread to the distant light modifying elements **510** in the room such that the light rays **511** from the light source **504** that are reflected off of theses surfaces **512** become local light source rays **513** at smaller angles from the nadir (directly down at zero degrees angle) substantially above or behind the user's eyes thus providing comfortable non-glaring lighting. These light direction modifying devices **514**, referred to herein as Satellite Light Source, STLS, are reflective surfaces or refractors or combinations thereof or other optical light modifying apparatus. The satellite light sources may be ubiquitous insofar as the level of the

wall or a painted wall or ceiling with sufficient reflectivity will function well as a secondary source. Thus specially installed STLS can work together with room elements of sufficient reflectivity using direct lighting and indirect lighting to achieve lighting goals. The secondary light source may be attached via an extended rod to the luminaire itself or may be a highly reflective large diameter ceiling medallion. The illumination advantages of having secondary light sources are many and include: lighting exits the light source at angles which do not cause glare, the lighting comes from additional directions to that of the luminaire avoiding shadows, and adds light from angles that contribute to the proper mix of vertical and horizontal lumens. In addition there are a number of practical, economic and efficiency advantages.

In a manual system, the fixture's **500** concentrated light sources **504** can be aimed using a laser pointer to aim the light beam **508** to target **519** on the re-directive optical device. This manual method may also be used to initially calibrate an automatic aiming system with preset scenario positions for the concentrated light sources stored into the logical controller **501**. In an automated embodiment, the light engine uses a computer vision capability to identify the whereabouts of persons performing visual tasks in the room. The controller then aims one or more concentrated light sources at the optical device which re-distributes the light locally. The light engine can be equipped with more than one aim-able concentrated light source and can provide more than one user with task lighting. Thus, a ceiling fixture **500** may have light sources providing a general lighting function with light aimed at the ceiling edges to perform an indirect, soffit lighting type of lighting effect, with task lighting performed by the concentrated light source aimed on the task directly from the fixture itself or via a re-directive STLS optical device. In a preferred embodiment an infra-red or visible laser on the concentrated light source assists the automated computer vision system in aiming all the light producing and modifying elements such that maximum light is directed on the visual task in real time. Undetectable infra-red sources may also be included in the light source array make-up so as to assist in computer vision recognition. These non-visible sources may be pulsed to aid in tracking of people, their eyes and objects while not disturbing normal vision.

The light engine **500** of FIG. **27** together with the re-directive optical devices of FIG. **28** can be used to integrate light energy obtained from the sun with the artificial lighting system. That is, where a building has apparatus for the collection of sunlight and its transport via light guides or fibers into the building's interior, the light fixture **500** will serve to distribute the sunlight within the living space. Whereby the light engine **500** has any of: a) optical device for accepting the solar light, b) optical guide paths for conducting the light; c) optical devices for redirecting the path of the light and d) filters for adjusting the amount and spectrum of the light to be used so as to be able to distribute it within to the room to where it is needed. These optical devices and filters include light valves, prisms, controllable piezoelectric light guides, MEMS devices, optical switches and mirrors to redirect or modulate light beams. In addition, the light engine has optical devices which when necessary, can direct the sunlight to the satellite re-directive optical devices deployed around the living space. When light from the sun is no longer sufficient the artificial lighting system powers the light sources to make up for the shortfall. The light engine may be placed on a wall and integrally include the sunlight collection system outdoors with the artificial light generation and distribution system indoors. It would be similar in concept to how a wall air-conditioner system works. The sunlight collection system via the controller would take the need for the lighting into account based on occupancy and environmental conditions. In the summer the system using dichroic or other filter method would remove the infra-red spectrum from the light while in the winter when heating is needed would pass the radiation indoors. The sunlight collection system using controlled re-directive optical devices to capture the sunlight will redirect the light through windows or optical paths to aid in light is required within the room.

FIG. **29** depicts an adjustable luminaire **500** in a lighting application where the user needs for illumination vary with time. The STLS **510** is a specially mounted remote reflective surface, strategically placed in the room so as to illuminate work, living or entertainment stations or alternatively is a wall or ceiling surface with sufficient or modified reflectivity. The re-directive optical devices have an optical design capable of efficiently redirecting the light symmetrically or asymmetrically for the performance of visual tasks such as looking at a computer screen or reading. They have means of attachment **515** to the ceiling, wall or placed on a piece of furniture. The STLS may be of fixed light modification characteristics or have means **516** for moving the reflecting surfaces **512** and selecting between various light distribution patterns. That is, the satellite light source **510** has manual or automatic means **516** for changing its optical performance, say from a spot light to a flood light distribution and/or it has automatic or manual means **517** for changing the direction of the satellite's illumination. In addition the outgoing beam **508** from the FAML **500** to the STLS **511** can be modified by the controller **501** via the light source **504** in a way that changes the output luminous flux to the visual task. The outgoing beam spread is varied or its aiming changed to a different area **518** on the STLS with a different light modification characteristic. To change the beam spread of light **508** exiting from light source **504** the logical controller **501** has means to vary the LED chips being powered or the configuration of beam modifying optical device **509**. The optical device may be a lens using refraction or a reflector, a combination of both or any other light ray modifying device.

In order to aid in aiming the concentrated light source **504** such as with the laser pointer device described earlier, there is a target area **519** on satellite **510** for use with manual or automated computer vision aiming. In an automated satellite embodiment there is need for electric power to control apparatus used for light beam aiming, sensors and communications. A hook up of control mechanism **517** to electricity from a battery or the mains power supply is provided for in attachment means **515**. In an advanced embodiment, satellite light source **510** is powered by photovoltaic cells **520** receiving light energy and converting it to electric energy which may be stored in the movement control apparatus **517**. The movement control apparatus **517** also has communications capability with the lighting control system and light engine **500**. To obtain better images for scene recognition software or for eye tracking, a camera or sensor **521** is positioned on the satellite light source **510**. Thus the STLS can provide high definition images of people and objects within a living space for use with the lighting control system as well as with other home automation or security systems.

In an automated embodiment of this invention the logical controller **501** can communicate with and modify the secondary satellite light source **510** optical performance, say from a spot light to a flood light distribution, via controlled joints **516** or alter the STLS aiming via [illegible] apparatus

517 to illuminate a different area or object in real time as picked up by the camera 507 and analyzed in controller 501. As the illumination need in the room changes, the controller 501 sends a light beam with tailored spread, intensity and chromacity to the re-directive STLS optical device or room surface best positioned in the room to provide the optimal lighting. The controller 501 determines the visual task needed to be performed at that moment and chooses the optimal STLS device in the room to send light towards. The controller re-directs light source 504 which is mounted on moveable joint 506 to beam correct intensity and chromacity light flux to that STLS. In instances where an installed STLS device is not correctly positioned to provide lighting at optimal incident angles, the wall or ceiling (if their reflectance and color values are reasonable) can be used. In order to power sensors and actuators on a STLS satellite not connected to the mains power supply, a battery can be used. In a preferred embodiment in place of a cumbersome power mains supply hookup, a photocell or power transducer is mounted on a portion of the STLS. It is used to translate light energy or radiation from the FAML or other energy source to electric power for use by power consuming elements such as sensors, automated motion equipment or communications devices on the STLS.

To further illustrate the capabilities of a multiple light source lighting fixture with differentiated control of the spatial light distribution coupled with a camera sensor system, an example of usage in a home environment is described. As shown in FIG. 29 a man seated on a chair reading a book 122 is detected by camera sensor 507 and the vision recognition software recognizes the scene and the logical controller 501 runs algorithms and looks up the recommended lighting level and set up from the data storage as described earlier. The light engine luminaire controller 501 adjusts concentrated light source 504 via joint 506 so that it is aimed at satellite reflector 510 which has been attached to the ceiling or wall. Reflector 510 is positioned and angled relative to the incoming beam 523 such that that the reflected beam 525 illuminates the book 522. The reader now receives illumination to read the book from the rear over his shoulder which is superior to receiving light from the luminaire 500 in front. To corroborate if enough light is being provided for the visual task of reading, the controller 501 uses feedback control methodology obtaining an approximation of the luminance on the book 522 from camera 507. The light intensity of beam 523 can be raised or lowered by logical controller 501 to conform with recommended practice. If the user is unhappy with the lighting system's performance, he signals logical controller 501 audibly or electromagnetically to affect a change and obtain their personally preferred lighting characteristics.

The table lamp 524 next to the man on the chair is another embodiment of this invention and consists of remotely positioned electricity to light energy conversion device 500 which beams light to a STLS mounted on a table atop a post which captures the beam 511 coming from centralized light engine 500 and redirects it downwards on the book 522. Thus the controller 501 has the capability to use an alternative path to illuminating the book 522. Instead of from behind and above the reader, it controls adjusting means 506 to redirect light source 504 such that it is aimed at table satellite lamp 524 which illuminate the book from the side. Another alternative illumination method to illuminating the book 522 is controller 501 directing light source 504 to illuminate the reflective wall section 525 proximate to the book 522. The logical controller 501 uses the camera sensor 507 and vision system 501 to check if there are obstacles in the beam path and choose the best illumination scheme at the lowest energy use for getting the visual task done. Most importantly, the user themselves have control access to the wide variety of optional lighting schemes from which to choose the one they prefer. Their preferences are then stored for future instances of the same application in controller 501. The logical controller 501 sensing that the TV 526 is being observed, such as when the TV screen is turned on and the book closed, adjusts luminaire 500 light output in that section of the room to the recommend lighting level and chromacity for TV viewing.

Another room occupant is sitting at the dining room table. She is sipping a cup at the same time as he is watching TV. At the same time logical controller 501 discerns, using scene recognition algorithms, that based on her head position, she is reading a book 527 and not watching the television screen 526. The concentrated light source 528 is aimed by controller 501 to provide direct illumination to perform the visual task of reading the book that she is assumed to be undertaking. If not happy with the lighting level she may command the lighting controller, either audibly or by a gesture picked up by the camera vision system or electromagnetically through a control device, to affect a change.

To further save energy the logical controller 501 receives input from the light sensor 507 that natural lighting from the window 529 is contributing to the illuminance on the book 527. To get an accurate reading of illuminance on the book from the natural lighting source, the logical controller will, for an instantaneous fraction of a second, indiscernible to the human eye, turn off the artificial lighting of luminaire 500. If the natural lighting is not at the required level per correct lighting practice, the controller drives area lighting LED light source 528 as needed to compensate. When the sun changes position, the altered contribution is picked up by the sensor 507 and the intensity of illuminator 504 is adjusted by the controller. Further power saving is obtained due to the differentiated light delivery capacity of the luminaire as well as its differentiated area sensor system. Light sources 502 on the light bar 503 whose aimings are towards surfaces illuminated by the sunlight are reduced in power while those directed at areas in the room far from the window not receiving a significant solar illumination are powered at the usual level.

In another embodiment of this invention, the centralized light engine 500 is adapted for use in an open plan office lighting system. The large office space is divided into cubicles and workstations beneath an acoustic ceiling. The light engine 500 is mounted within the plenum space above the acoustic ceiling in a location central to a number of workstations. It is equipped with a number of high intensity narrow beam light sources 504 which project light to STLS satellite light sources 510 which is a light guide or reflector which redirects the beam through a transparent aperture in the acoustic ceiling to the workstation below. The STLS sensor 507 detects whether an office worker is at the workstation and communicates with controller 501 to power the light source 504 so as to provide lighting at the workstation. The camera sensor 507 relays images to the controller which analyzes the data to determine the visual task being performed and drives the LEDs so as to obtain the correct illumination. When the workstation is vacated, even temporarily, the lighting returns to the low ambient lighting level. More than one STLS can be used per workstation to provide illumination to individual objects, surfaces or other STLS or light guides beneath the acoustic ceiling which can provide illumination under overhanging shelves on work surfaces.

The artificial vision scene recognition system algorithms programmed into the controller **501** are obtained by methodologies known in the art such as using neural network architectures and learning algorithms for pattern recognition, image processing, and computer vision. The remote lighting system that has been disclosed herein, the home example of which has been illustrated in FIG. **29** and an office example in the preceding paragraph is a generalized illumination technique for providing distinctive area illumination from a single light engine is a unique teaching of the present invention; whereby a centralized area lighting system is comprised of 1) one or more primary light sources which generate light from electricity capable of directly and indirectly illuminating a living space, 2) differentiated secondary light sources, dispersed over the area that receive light energy from the primary light source and 3) sensors that are in communication with the controller which provide feedback on the illumination, help in aiming the light output from the sources and collect images for identifying visual tasks to aid the controller in directing and regulating the light. The light is sent either directly to the areas to be lit or to the secondary STLS, wall, ceiling, or satellite light sources. The result being that the lighting system provides correct and comfortable lighting for a variety of visual tasks being carried out in different, distinct sections of the area.

FIG. **30** is a perspective view of a luminaire with a special night light functionality. In locations such as a bedroom or tent used for security forces, besides the luminaire's standard white-light illumination function, there is need for an additional nightlight function for providing light of different chromacity or wavelength. Thus in an embodiment of the adjustable luminaire of this invention, a number of modes of lighting, varying in light intensity alone or both in intensity and chromacity are provided for by night light luminaire **530**. The luminaire is comprised of multiple light sources **531**, **532**, and **533** of different color spectrum and/or wavelength. The LEDs are powered by electronic power condition gear **534** and logical controller **535** which implements these modes based on programmed times via the light fixture's internal clock as well as by an input device. An optional sensor pack **536** is provided which has a camera array or a light and/or occupancy sensor.

Using light at wavelengths that have different effects in the stimulation of the rods and cones in the eye, it is possible to provide night vision that does not require adaptation time normally required to best see in darkness. In addition it is possible to provide night light vision with light at wavelengths that do not interfere with the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone, by the pineal gland which is sensitive to light. In addition it is possible to provide bright light to increase serotonin levels and aid in waking. There are also instances where one occupant of a room needs to arise while another desires to remain sleeping and not be awakened by the turning on of a disturbing light. Thus it would be preferable for the lighting fixture used in sleeping areas to possess a lower illumination mode which allows for limited visual tasks to be carried out by some, while not intense enough to awaken others. It would also be preferable that the lighting intensity and/or spectrum be unique such that it does not disturb the sleep cycle of others who may be sleeping in the room by avoiding the suppression of melatonin production by the pineal gland.

An application for the use of the luminaire **530** is in permanent or temporary sleeping quarters for military or security personnel. The power conditioning equipment **534** is able to receive power at different voltages from 10 volts to 480 Volts, from DC to any frequency any source of power. In a military setting it is important that soldiers exiting the sleeping quarters are able to immediately perform visual tasks in the darkness without waiting for their eye to adapt to the dark. This is because rhodopsin, also known as visual purple, a biological pigment of the retina that is responsible for enabling vision in low-light conditions, immediately photo-bleaches when exposed to light and it takes about 30 minutes to fully regenerate. Thus it would be beneficial for security force personnel who need to move around the living quarters to ready themselves for duty could use light at low levels that would not interfere with the rhodopsin. Thus, when the quarters are occupied only by non-sleeping individuals, the logical controller **535** powers the white light sources **531** at the power level set for high-activity general lighting. When the quarters are occupied by sleeping individuals, the logical controller **535** dims the white light sources **531** and powers the special wavelength light sources **532** and **533** at low intensity.

The special wavelength light sources are chosen as a function of the eye's photoreceptor's sensitivity. The rods (responsible for night vision) are most sensitive at a particular color blue-green (507 nm). Thus low lighting by light source **532** at that wavelength would provide the greatest visual response while minimizing energy causing the rhodopsin breakdown. A problem however with scotopic rod vision is that nothing can be seen directly in front of the eyes (no rods in the center of the retina). To see in the extreme dark one must learn to look about 15-20° off center. Not doing so results in the night blind spot which can cause mishaps and physical injury. On the other hand, the center 1.5% of the retina (the fovea) which provides the most detailed vision is packed almost exclusively with red sensitive cones. Thus to correct for the night blind spot light source **533** producing low levels of red light at a greater than a 650 nm wavelength are powered to illuminate. Experimentation shows that red LEDs with a peak around 697 nm seem to work best to supplement the low intensity blue-green 505 nm wavelength LED **532**. Other wavelengths to accomplish the night vision functionality are possible and the two described here are by way of example.

Thus in an embodiment of the luminaire **530** for use where there is immediacy in the performance of low light visual tasks, there is provided an illumination capability with light sources of wavelength which interfere minimally with seeing in the dark. FAML **530** for use in airplane cockpits or living quarters used by security forces in a state of high readiness has a controller **535** and control gear **534** which drives special wavelength light sources **532** and **533** at the above mentioned wavelengths at low intensity. Either of light sources can be present and used independently or most beneficially in unison in the luminaire **530** to facilitate night vision. When maximum dark adaptation is required the red light intensity is set by the controller **535** and monitored by optional light sensor **536** to provide a low luminance of 0.07-0.35 cd/m2 (0.02-0.10 ft-L). In normal states of readiness the controller employs light sources **531** producing white light general lighting at an illumination level recommend by the IES for normal activities which is dimmed to a night light setting during non-alert low readiness situations. The nighttime low setting is such that the light flux will yield an illuminance of 0.15 lux on the floor with the chromacity of 4000K similar to moonlight.

In an embodiment of the multiple wavelength producing lighting fixture **530** light sources are provided that can be used to aid in the onset of sleep and/or in the onset of awakening. The multiple light source fixture is equipped with control and light source apparatus illuminating persons

or animals with light at wavelengths that are conducive to sleep or awakening. Kayumov et al. showed that light containing only wavelengths greater than 530 nm does not suppress melatonin production even in relatively bright-light conditions. Also Brainard et al in "Evidence for a Novel Circadian Photoreceptor" The Journal of Neuroscience, 15 Aug. 2001 shows that in normal healthy humans, equal photon density exposures of 1.9×10^{18} photons/cm^2 at 460, 630, and 700 nm monochromatic light elicited a significant melatonin suppression at 460 nm while only small reductions of plasma melatonin levels at 630 and 700 nm. Thus the lighting fixture **530** has a general lighting light sources **531** which has radiation at wavelengths that suppress melatonin production and other light sources **532** and/or **533** which are at wavelengths above 570 nm and do not suppress melatonin production. Individuals with difficulty in going to sleep who are aided by increasing the melatonin level can then instruct logical controller **535** to provide only melatonin friendly illumination at the necessary time of day so as not to interfere with their or the children's sleep time. To aid in awakening the controller would illuminate the living space with light sources **531** which have melatonin suppressing wavelengths helping the individual to awaken. Research shows that if the light is in a particular spectrum (around 460 nanometers, which is in the blue range) greater benefits can be derives even from much dimmer light.

In places where individuals with sleep disorders reside in the hours before going to sleep, it would preferable to have illuminating devices capable of influencing sleep patterns. Thus it may be preferable to use lighting house wide to control sleep times. In a preferred embodiment the lighting fixture in the living room, bedroom or office would aid in the onset of sleep or aid in the onset of awakening with the lighting fixture making use of intensity variation and chromacity. The lighting intensity in the patients surround is controlled with reference to the planned sleep hours to adjust the circadian cycle and/or induce hormones so as to assist sleepers to arise by the use of light that is stimulating.

FIG. **31** is a perspective view of a multiple light source adjustable luminaire with added irradiation functionality. Returning to the geometrically adjustable FAML design with light sources for general lighting on moveable light bars and aim-able spot lighting sources we present an innovative added functionality illumination device. In this embodiment the luminaire **540** has means for limiting at certain times the spectrum of the illumination visible to an individual with difficulty in falling asleep. A fully featured FAML embodiment would be comprised of: a logical controller **541** having means for processing algorithms, data storage, communications and control capability for the task of influencing sleep cycles; power conditioning means **542** for powering controllers, sensors and light sources; standard full spectrum chromacity light sources combined with uniquely driveable light sources **543** that produce light at wavelengths most effective in stimulating or suppressing nocturnal melatonin; and sensors for detecting light and/or images **544**. That is, the logical controller **541** can drive LED chips comprising light module **543** that produce a wide range of wavelengths or selectively drive only chips within a permitted wavelength range for some medical, therapeutic or even aesthetic effect. The narrow beam spread, spot light illuminating source **544** also has light producing semiconductor chips of a variety of wavelengths that can be independently powered from driver electronics **542**. The light sources **543** and **544** are on movable mounting elements such as light bar **545** and there is the provision of sensors for logical control and feedback in sensor bar **546**.

The use of the luminaire to affect sleep cycles is as follows: prior to going to sleep the individual will command controller **541** of the FAML **540** to illuminate their surroundings exclusively using light sources producing wavelengths greater than 530 nm. Light sources **543** and **544** of one or more wavelengths above 530 nm may be employed. Utilizing algorithms or stored preset power levels the logical control via the metametric mixing of light source chips in **543** and **544** illuminates the area or visual task with a color close to white light. Thus, the individual will be able to carry out routine tasks such as watching television in the living room or reading a book in bed. However the pineal gland will be "fooled" into producing melatonin as if the individual was sitting in darkness.

The melatonin friendly white light can be generated for example by using commercially available Osram Golden Dragon Plus LEDs LT, LY and LR W5AM as the light source chips or diodes comprising the light modules **543** and **544** in the FALM bedroom luminaire **540**. When powered by driver **542** at 20 Watts at approximately 350 mA, about 1,200 lumen of very warm white 1200K Color Coordinated Temperature, CCT, light can be produced using the following mix: 156 lumen of 528 nm higher wavelength green light mixed with 400 lumen of 590 nm yellow and 640 lumen of 625 nm red. This mix yields a good color rendering index, CRI of 80 while still allowing for melatonin production. Alternately a single monochromatic LED above 530 nm could be powered but vision and comfort would be compromised. The same luminaire **540** in a second operating mode, that is not required to stimulate melatonin production, can at the same wattage produce a cooler color temperature light. This is achieved by powering blue light source diodes in addition to the previous mix while having the logical controller **541** adjust the power level of each LED chip. For example with the addition of two watts or 48 lumen of 470 nm blue LEDs (e.g. Osram LB W5AM) a 4250 Kelvin CCT daylight white light can be produced using 600 lumen of 528 nm green light mixed with 500 lumen of 590 nm yellow and a mere 100 lumen of 625 nm red yielding a good color rendering CRI of 82.

In another embodiment, the same fixture **540** is used for the standard lighting in the bedroom in a normal high output operating mode. Thus by powering more light sources still at approximately 350 mA a higher lighting level and whiter chromacity is achieved. For example doubling the power to 40 Watts with the addition of four watts or 100 lumen of 470 nm Blue LEDs (e.g. Osram LB W5AM) a 3800 Kelvin CCT cool white light can be produced using 500 lumen of 528 nm green light mixed with 400 lumen of 590 nm yellow and 150 lumen of 625 nm red yielding a good color rendering CRI of 82. A similar effect can be achieved without increasing the number of light sources but instead increasing the current to each LED. This usually however results in shortening of the LEDs useful lifespan. Using a controller **541** and power source **542** capable of powering each LED individually a full range of dimming to very low light levels can be achieved. In a alternative methodology of using different wavelength LEDs for generating melatonin friendly light, a white LED or any other wide spectrum light source could be used with the manual or automatic introduction of a light filter to remove wavelengths lower than 530 nm as needed.

Thus the same bedroom fixture **540** can serve as a night light obviating the need for an additional night light lighting unit in the same room. Again, the night light mode has special chromacity to allow visual tasks to be performed yet with minimal interference to sleep as described above in FIG. **30**. Utilizing the non-symmetric light distribution can

bility of the FAML when in night light mode, higher intensity lighting for orientation could be provided in areas of movement around the bed or on the way to the bathroom while zero or only very low intensity night lighting would fall near the head of the sleeping person. The fixture **540** is illustrated as having been hung on the ceiling of a bedroom above the beds for two occupants with the spot lights **544** facing the wall above the head of the beds. In the spirit of the adjustable luminaire of the present invention, the light bars **545** holding the light modules **543** have been swung out of direct view of an individual lying on the bed with their eyes facing upwards to the ceiling. The flexibility of the invention is again demonstrated insofar as this re-configuration ability is unique to the multiple light source lighting fixture making it a truly universal lighting fixture. In this unusual case of the eyes facing upwards, indirect lighting via the ceiling becomes the recommended lighting practice alternative of choice, especially if the TV is mounted high off the floor.

In another embodiment, the FAML bedroom luminaire **540** is equipped with a camera **546** and the logical controller has means for image recognition and computer vision. Thus now as opposed to a standard night light which is always on, the innovative night light **540** using computer vision analysis could be highly dimmed or off most of the time making it easier to sleep and saving power. It would be reactivated when there is major movement on the part of the sleeper indicative of the need for illumination or a baby crying is picked up by microphone in sensor pack **546** in anticipation of light being needed by the parent awakening to care for the child. Greater movement such as getting out of bed would further increase light levels for proper orientation and object avoidance.

As a further customization of the illumination characteristics, when utilizing the light source aim-ability feature of the FALM, one occupant of the room could receive controlled exposure to lighting conducive to melatonin production while other occupants in the room at the same time receive a normal, fuller spectrum illumination. Thus the right side spot light **544** could be of melatonin friendly light wavelengths for the individual receiving its light while a second individual in the second bed receives a full spectrum of light for reading from the left side spot light **549**.

In addition to using light of specific wavelength for treatment of sleep disorders and other circadian rhythm disorders such as delayed sleep phase syndrome, light therapy or phototherapy can be used for the treatment of vitamin D deficiency, skin disorders (for example psoriasis, acne vulgaris and eczema, and some psychiatric disorders for example seasonal affective disorder. As described earlier the spot light source **544** can be moved by actuators under the control of the logical controller **541** much as a moving head stage light follows actors on the stage. This is a unique feature of a computer/machine vision capable FAML irradiating device which can follow and irradiate the patient while they are carrying out their daily activities and is of major benefit. To ensure that the light therapy rays from the FAML strikes the retina from the best angle, a portable STLS may be placed on the floor or furniture in front of the patients eyes. In instances where the FAML is providing UVB radiation such as in vitamin D therapy and high intensity UVB is hazardous to the eyes, the computer vision system would make sure to stop radiation unless it knew that the eyes were not being irradiated. Other medical applications of light therapy also include pain management, accelerated wound healing, hair growth, improvement in blood properties and blood circulation, and sinus-related diseases and disorders. Many of these use low level laser therapy and red light therapy in the 620-660 nm range.

In an embodiment of the therapeutic luminaire **540** having radiation sources controlled by a logical controller using computer image recognition algorithms that enable face recognition the device is capable of providing the correct dosage to an individual. For example curing SAD winter depression caused by serotonin deficiency by treatment with bright light therapy the luminaire's logical controller **541** will measure the individual patient's exposure time ensuring that it complies with the medically prescribed dosage to preserve serotonin levels for that time of year. In an embodiment where the computer vision system **546** has capability for eye recognition and tracking, a more accurate dosage intensity and exposure time is metered. The dosage analysis is based on either computer knowledge that the eye is exposed by actually measuring the radiation reflection off the eye which may include a daylight component in addition to the artificial luminaire component. Thus a more accurate therapy record may be obtained and reported to a monitoring computer or health practitioner if necessary. If a satellite light re-directive STLS device is positioned fore of the patient, a specular mirror section is provided on the STLS and may be used by the camera imaging system to capture the eye or reflections off of the eye and verify the dosage received. Non-disturbing infra-red radiation may be used by the transducer sensor system **546** to capture and measure the eye reflections for imaging and dosage measurement purposes. Using eye-tracking algorithms the controller logs all the time the eyes have received the therapeutic radiation dosage and adjust the treatment accordingly. Having communications apparatus the controller conveys the treatment history to medical care supervisory personnel.

Another embodiment of the luminaire assists people to awaken at any hour by irradiating them with shorter wavelengths of light or safe UV, which suppress melatonin production. A FAML **540** is provided with: a logical controller **541** having algorithms and data for the task of influencing sleep cycles and with light sources that produce light at wavelengths most effective in suppressing nocturnal melatonin. It then uses a time and intensity controlled exposure to illuminate the person or animal at a prescribed interval time in advance of the wake time. Decreases in melatonin production in human and animals are known to be caused by environmental lighting, especially short-wavelength lighting (between 460 and 525 nm). Test results strengthen earlier findings that the human circadian system is more sensitive to the short wavelengths of light than the longer wavelengths. It is principally blue light, around 460 to 480 nm, that suppresses melatonin, increasingly with increased light intensity and length of exposure (Wirz-Justice, A; Benedetti, F; Terman, M (2009). Chronotherapeutics for Affective Disorders: A Clinician's Manual for Light and Wake Therapy. Basel: Karger. ISBN 978-3-8055-9120-1. It is also possible to use violet colored LED to which the visual response is low such as a 420 nm wavelength. The disturbance to sleeping individuals may be lower, however, though studies demonstrated a clear fluence-response relationship between 420-nm light and melatonin suppression the response is weaker.

Thus a person sleeping in their bed could program the lighting fixture controller **541** to begin irradiation with the melatonin suppressing wavelength LEDs in advance of the wake up time as required. Again, with the light aiming differentiation capability of the FALM **540**, two people in the same room with different wake-up times could receive different dosage at different times as programmed into the

controller. One person could be irradiated with melatonin producing radiation or none at all while the other receives melatonin suppressing irradiation. Alarm clock functionality can be added to the logical controller **541** of the bedroom illuminating device and/or an additional device **547** is provided. It will use lighting and/or sound from alarm speakers **547** to awaken the individual when wake time finally arrives. Voice commands can be used to program and turn off the alarm clock. To ensure the user is really awake the alarm clock can ask the user to solve a mathematical equation before stopping the alarm.

In another embodiment example of a bedroom application (a living room or kitchen lighting application would be much the same), the FAML **540** is located on the ceiling near the room center. It uses distributed light sources **543** or optical means over a single light source to provide for homogeneous ambient lighting and concentrated light sources **544** or optics to create a narrow beam for task lighting. The concentrated sources **544** and **549** may be used to provide illumination for the visual task of reading a book thus replacing the night-table lamps. It is preferable that the beam not come from above and in front of the reader lying in bed as the rays from above will disturb reader. Also one occupant of the room may desire to sleep while the other is reading. Thus a re-directive satellite light source STLS is placed directly behind or off to a side and behind the reader. The STLS has a substantially specular reflectivity rather than a diffuse one so as to maintain a concentrated spot beam with little spill light beyond the book. Of course the book itself is a Lambertian reflector but the maximum has been done to minimize disturbing others. The FAML **540** configuration can be adjusted upon installation to have the narrow beam spot light aimed at the STLS. The STLS itself may be manually adjusted by the user to best direct the light for the visual task at hand such as reading a book in bed. The user will keep the laser pointer on the target disc while swiveling the STLS until the book receives the maximum light. This is similar to adjusting the shade of the table lamp which it replaces. When properly aligned there is very little spill light and the other occupant of the room can sleep undisturbed. In an embodiment having a computer vision enabled luminaire capable of determining the book position, the controller **541** will automatically re-direct the light beam **548** from the movable light source **544** and/or re-aim the movable STLS so as to maximize illumination effectiveness. Alternatively, the wall or surface behind the bed or the headboard has sufficiently good optical characteristic enabling light from the beam to be used or has had a specially reflective decal placed on it. In a computer vision enabled embodiment the logical controller **541** is programmed such that when the reader puts the book away the light goes out or slowly dims into the night light mode.

It has been demonstrated that a single bedroom luminaire **540** can replace two other typical bedroom lighting fixtures. The night-table lamp and the nightlight. In addition, by using the directional light output capability of the FAML fixture, this spectrally accurate lighting may be further limited in its illumination coverage to bedroom areas where movement is possible, thus not shining towards a sleeping person's eyes. Using machine vision techniques for image recognition, the position of those sleeping and those up and awake is determined. In addition computer vision allows for automatic tracking spot lighting similar in function to how a moving head stage light for stage performers follows them about the stage. All this can be carried out by the automated lighting fixture **540** where the light sources are moved by the controller so as to illuminate only the person awake in the room. The trajectory of the light beam is checked by the controller such that the light beam does not fall on the head of anyone else sleeping in the room.

FIG. **32** is a perspective view of an industrial lighting fixture for use in hazardous locations. These are locations that are characterized by the presence of combustible gasses or dust particles. So that the explosion proof lighting fixture **550** can to obtain ExProof certification for use in hazardous locations, it is constructed in a unique manner which prevents ignition of the gases or dusts by electricity or heat produced by the fixture. The intrinsic safety protection techniques used in its construction enable safe operation in explosive atmospheres and ensure that the available electrical and thermal energy in the system is always low enough that ignition of the hazardous atmosphere cannot occur. The intrinsic safety of the illuminating device **550** includes the control of component temperatures even in fault conditions (such as an internal short inside an electronic device). The electrical control gear **551**, logical controller **552** and LED light sources **553** are all thermally protected. The temperature of a failed component will not rise to a level higher than the autoignition temperature of a combustible atmosphere. Current limiting safeguards, such resistors and fuses, are employed in the electronic circuitry throughout to ensure that in no circumstance can a component reach a hazardous temperature.

To a major extent the fixture is intrinsically safe as it is hermetically sealed for life. This is accomplished because the LEDs **553** are driven at or below design currents as well as having the junction being thermally cooled to well below allowable temperatures due to lifetime and explosion proof certification considerations. Note that in prior art ExProof fixtures the lamp needs to be replaced and therefore allowance was made in fixture design for opening the fixture to replace the lamp. Under these low current cool operation conditions the LEDS will provide 90% of their initial lumen output even after 100,000 hours or over 20 years of night operation. This in turn allows for a design where the LEDs are encapsulated for life in resin type materials **554**. There is no possible contact with explosive materials between electrical or heat generating components. Thus in this novel hazardous location fixture design, the LEDs, electronics and electrical components are intrinsically safe in a sealed for life fixture. This is an inherent safety design and allows for the fixture to be located even in the most hazardous locations including underground mines or inside of tanks i.e. division 1 and zone 0 classified hazardous areas. In an embodiment of the fixture there are no screws to open for access to the internal fixture parts other than on the wiring box **555** which connects the Exproof fixture to the power mains. The wiring box itself is approved for zone 0 hazardous locations and has explosion proof sealing apparatus. While prior art fixtures that can be opened for service may not be properly closed by service personnel thus becoming an explosion hazard this sealed fixture is foolproof in that there is no access for life.

Referring now to the adjustable lighting fixture embodiment in more detail, in FIG. **32** there is shown an illuminating or irradiating device **550** which is capable of being adjusted to match the radiation spatial distribution with the actual illuminating requirements of the surround where the lighting fixture **550** has been installed. The light sources **553** are mounted on curvilinear support structures **556**. The rear side **557** of the support structure (or light bar) **556** is a heat exchanger structure of increased surface area for the transfer of heat from the LED junctions to the surrounding air. The front surface material **558** of the support structure is highly transmissive to light allowing the light generated by the light

sources **553** to exit the luminaire. These curvilinear support structures **556** possess a unique geometry and thermal transfer characteristic and are innovative in a number a ways. The luminaire is comprised a multiplicity of light sources having respective spectral distributions and respective light distribution patterns which are directional and subtend lesser angles than those of the overall luminaire light distribution pattern. The light source mounting structure **556** is configured to mount the light sources **553** so arranged on the structure such that the respective directional light distribution patterns and the respective spectral distributions combine to form an efficiently distributed overall light distribution pattern. This overall light distribution has been calculated to efficiently provide the surface areas intended for illumination by the fixture **550** with the design illuminance. In this unique configuration the overall light distribution pattern, subtending greater angles than that of the respective light distribution patterns is produced directly by the multiplicity of light sources without recourse to inefficient non-integral reflectors and/or refractors.

As the overall spatial light distribution of luminaire **550** is comprised of the sum of the narrower beam light sources **553**, each light source covers a specific area proximate to the luminaire. The aiming angles of the sources of known light flux and beam angle are determined by using the inverse cosine law to determine the amount of light flux required to illuminate the surfaces to be covered by the luminaire. Once the aiming angle with reference to the nadir is known there is yet another design criterion that needs to be met. There is great importance in maintaining the light emitting diode junction at low temperature. To remove the heat from the junction it is important for the LED assembly **553** to have excellent thermal contact with the heat sink **557** at every aiming angle. Thus the construction of the support structure has been dictated by the individual light source aimings that are designed to illuminate both near and distant surfaces with the recommended illuminance. In addition, the rear side of the support structure **556** which is exposed to the outside air is integral with the heat sink **557** which is most beneficially in direct contact with the LED junction to maximize thermal transfer away from the diode structure to the environment. Uniquely both of the design requirements have been met by the unique construction of the support arm **556**. The final benefit of the unique curvilinear light bar is the strength it imparts to the structure. In an embodiment the shock proof glass lens **558** is slightly recessed within the light bar channel **556** allowing for the edge **559** to act as a protective bumper protecting the glass from breakage even if impacted by a metal tool. Often explosion proof glass globes are protected by a guard. The curved metal guards protect the glass from mechanical breakage in the harsh industrial setting. The shape of the bars **556** and the recessed glass cover maintains this protective design approach to effect shielding from mechanical breakage.

An exemplary embodiment of the adjustable explosion proof fixture in a chemical processing plant characterized by an open facility design is presented. In the facility, piping and vessels are supported by the skeletal support structure with walkways, floors and stairs made of metal grating. The walkways, vessels, machinery and piping all need to be illuminated at night by lighting fixtures placed on the structure along the walkways. In this lighting application example the walkways are at the exterior edge of the structure with the piping and machinery towards the interior. Beyond the walkway fence there is no structure and no need for illumination. The configuration of the lighting fixture as shown in FIG. **33** has been arranged so as to illuminate inwards towards the vessels, machinery and piping as well as along the walkways and stairs but not outward into free space. The luminaire has been mounted on an upright beam at height of 3 meters at the inward edge of the 1.5 meter wide walkway. The LED bar **560** is rotated 15 degrees off the nadir out of the page around the axis **561** to be aimed at the center of the walkway and the LED **553** beam spread is 30 degrees. LED **562**, because it is projecting to the work plane further away at a higher angle from the nadir, will, following the inverse square and cosine law, have a narrower beam spread (at least along the width of the walkway i.e. the beam **564** may be rectangular or elliptical, taller than it is wide) ensuring that most of the light is utilized and not spilled over the edges of the walkway. The light bars **556** and **563** have mechanical means to be rotated 360 degrees about the center **565** and have been aimed to the same side, inwards to the facility. Thus they illuminate the piping and machinery and do not shine out of the facility wasting the energy or even causing light pollution as would a standard prior art luminaire. Now in their new configuration, the light intensity output of each LED must be reset in the driving electronics **551** and controller **552** so as take into account overlapping coverage on surfaces to be maintained at the recommended illuminance.

In a preferred embodiment a sensor apparatus **566** is capable of measuring the illuminance of surfaces in the processing facility and providing the logical controller **552** the necessary feedback information to control the power to the light sources **553** etc so that the illuminance goals are met. Alternately, if the light bars have been incorrectly configured in aimings that do not allow for coherent illumination of the surfaces, the controller communicates the necessary aiming modification to the installer. An example of the logical controller **552** circuitry, computing apparatus and algorithm processing were described above in FIGS. **22** and **23**. In an embodiment where sensor **566** is a digital camera and the logical controller **552** has means for computer vision, an installer can use reference sheets of known reflectivity and luminance to calibrate the illumination level setting of the individual light sources within the logical controller **552** based on the fixtures initial factory calibration data. For example, when setting up the system the installer can customize the illuminance level on each element of interest. The system calibrates light coverage by firing LEDs at synchronized timings with the vision analysis system **552** determining which LED illuminates what surface. Next the installer can input the desired illuminance via the reference sheet by indicating on it the number of lux desired on the surface. For example attaching a note with 200 lux printed on it on a valve. The image recognition software then provides the logical controller the illuminance goal of 200 lux on that surface and the logical controller **552** powers the light sources **553** etc aimed towards that surface with the necessary power signal to obtain the needed light flux. Feedback is provided to the installer if additional light sources are needed or their re-aiming is required. Information is provided to the installer through visual display on the logical controller **552** of the luminaire or another display device in communication with the logical controller **552**.

In another embodiment the cooling of the harsh environment luminaire **550** is effected by using liquid cooling of the LED light sources. The coolant may be anything from deionized water (approximately 18.2 megohm-cm) to heat-conductive oil. The oil may be part of the methodology used to secure intrinsic safety classification from ignition danger of electrical circuits in explosive environments. It may also be an optically transmissive medium which couples the

cally with the light sources to produce a desired light distribution with other complementary optical devices. The oil may be pumped mechanically with a pumping apparatus such as a long life diaphragm pump to cool the diode junction. Alternately, in a preferred embodiment shown here, thermo siphon effect circulation is utilized to convect the thermal transfer fluid from the light bars **560**, **556** and **563** to the central heat exchanger **568**. The thermo siphon return post **567** serves as the path for the cooled lower density cooling fluid to return to the light bars **560**, **556** and **563** from the heat exchanger **568**. The benefit of the thermo siphon system is that it is motor less, doesn't require power and is highly reliable. It also adds longevity and efficiency to the LED light sources by offering superior heat transfer rates maintaining the diode junctions at the lowest possible temperature.

FIG. **33** is the process flow chart for novel web based computer application that can help the customer design the multiple light source luminaire for their particular lighting application and order it compete correctly configured from the factory. Alternately, in a DIY luminaire version, they can receive all the necessary luminaire parts with their unique set of assembly instructions for their lighting application. The build-the luminaire-to-order program turns the customer into a professional luminaire and lighting designer. In creating the tailor made luminaire the customer, aka lighting fixture designer, has control of illumination performance based on the skeletal light engine design as well as a choice of various aesthetic luminaire outer body designs. The program is novel insofar as it builds the lighting fixture from multiple light sources according to the dictates of the living space. Prior art practice used hitherto in other lighting programs take standard lighting fixtures with known photometric data as to the light distribution and calculates the resultant illuminance obtained on the workplace or room surfaces. Here the process begins with specifying a surface illuminance and using goal solving techniques, the application builds the fixture's light distribution. Next, in a unique process, the computer application using engineering and look-up table algorithms chooses light sources and places them on the fixture to obtain the desired light distribution.

In practice the customer inputs the lighting application geometry, fixture mounting position, living space elements and projected usage answering a live questionnaire. Digital camera pictures of the living space uploaded to the site may aid the program in generating the architectural CAD lighting layout. The customer assigns visual task information to areas of the room, e.g. reading chair, adult over 50 years old etc. The layout process ends with a map of the room surfaces now assigned with illuminance levels. The program assigns a specific orientation of the luminaire within the living space e.g. fixture orientation mark facing east window. The luminaire in practice must be hung in the room in the instructed orientation. A preliminary grid is assigned to the room surfaces based on the distances from the luminaire to the surface and the light intensity limits of the light sources. By using the inverse square and cosine law with known illuminance, distances and angles the program solves for the luminous intensity. By working a luminaire design program such as Photopia™ from LTI Optics in reverse, the light source ray distribution properties are obtained. The program then looks up in the light source library the light source with the best matching spatial intensity distribution for illuminating the specific grid area. The design program then arranges the selected light sources on a fixture skeleton structure to obtain the overall necessary illumination. The web application next simulates the fixture performance through lighting design software applications known in the art such as AGI32™ from Lighting Analysts. The computer routine checks the lighting layout against best practice guidelines for visual comfort from glare, lighting levels and recommends need for additional light modules, luminaires or reflective satellite light sources. The customer can review the simulated lighting output in their application and after a few fine tuning iterations a final design can be satisfactorily achieved. Now that the fixture skeleton and light source positions thereon are known, the customer then chooses from the available candidates of aesthetic luminaire outer façade choices that can be used with the dictated skeletal structure. The final fixture outer design and lighting performance is simulated. Should the customer be unhappy with the aesthetics or performance they may begin again with the option of forcing an aesthetic design which may dictate a less than optimal skeletal structure. When satisfied, the customer orders the luminaire to be assembled by the manufacturer to spec. In the DIY version the web application generates the fixture parts list for the kit to be sent to the customer. It is clear that the application is not only web based but can be a downloadable version run from a computer.

In another version of this Do-It-Yourself lighting designer application, the main skeleton lighting fixture with the power supply electronics and the camera based vision system and controller is supplied to the customer. The camera vision system measures the room geometry and identifies room contents as described earlier via algorithms known in the art for measuring distances with a camera and pattern recognition techniques for identification. Based on the information garnered about the lighting application such as by following a computerized lighting application design questionnaire and checklist (activities performed in the room, age of the occupants etc), the lighting layout is specified and the lighting fixture design with the light source layout is determined using the lighting design software. The answers to the question are input via a speaker microphone system on the lighting fixture or via come other input device such as a computer or smart-phone in communication with the controller. Once the illumination needs have been determined and the fixture designed the rest of the light sources are ordered up and the DIY fixture similar to **470** in FIG. **24** is assembled

While the preferred embodiment of this invention comprises an adjustable luminaire having means for changing the spatial light distribution as well as the spectral light distribution, it is clear that embodiments of this invention may offer only the spatial light output distribution adjustability as for example when using a single color spectrum LED for all the light sources or only color spectrum adjustability where spectrally differentiated light sources have been used but there is no means for adjusting the spatial light distribution. Many of the novel features of this invention disclosed herein in this continuation in part of the earlier disclosure of the Multiple light illuminating system included herein by reference apply to the lighting fixture embodiments of that disclosure as well.

CONCLUSION

We have been disclosed a luminaire with control of at least one of the light intensity, light spectrum and light direction and that further being combined with a controller and directional sensors such as a camera having an artificial vision system capability is uniquely capable of fulfilling the

vision of lighting on an as needed basis in the optimal intensity, spectrum and placement.

There has thus been shown and described, among other things, a multiple-source lighting technology which allows for the design and construction of illuminating devices. Many changes, modifications, variations and other uses and applications of the subject invention will, however, become apparent to those skilled in the art after considering this specification and the accompanying drawings which disclose the preferred embodiments thereof. All such changes, modifications, variations and other uses and applications which do not depart from the spirit and scope of the invention are deemed to be covered by the invention without departing from the spirit or scope of the following claims.

Although a limited number of preferred embodiments of the present invention have been illustrated in the accompanying drawings and described in the foregoing detailed description, it is possible mix and combine the features of one embodiment with another to create a DLF with differing characteristics as taught in the method herein. Therefore, it will be understood that the invention is not limited to the embodiments disclosed, but is capable of numerous rearrangements, modifications, and substitutions without departing from the spirit of the invention as set forth and defined by the following claims. The invention should therefore not be limited by the above described embodiment, method, and examples, but by all embodiments and methods within the scope and spirit of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A light fixture for illuminating an area to be lit capable of automatically meeting specific illumination requirements of different sub-areas within the area to be lit, comprising:

a. a multiplicity of independently controllable light sources, including at least two light sources of directional light output, such that each said source substantially illuminates a different sub-area within the area to be lit, the light sources having at least one of controllable light intensity and spectral light distribution;

b. a controller for adjusting at least one of a light intensity and light spectrum of the light sources;

c. one or more detectors for sensing at least one of objects, surfaces and beings within the area to be lit including the specific sub-area location information and of passing the sensed information to the controller and;

d. a processor for processing the sensed information and determining illumination requirements of the at least one of objects, surfaces and beings using at least one of artificial intelligence, pattern recognition, video analytics, and look-up tables and for directing the controller to adjust the light source for that sub-area to meet the specific illumination requirement.

2. The illuminating device of claim **1** where the detector is comprising at least one of (i) a camera being a photo sensor array coupled with an optical lens, (ii) a photo sensor, (iii) an ultrasound transducer and sensor, (iv) microwave transducer and sensor, and (v) pyroelectric detectors.

3. The illumination device of claim **1**, wherein the illuminated area is indoors and further comprising a detector for detecting variable illumination from daylight and/or sunlight entering indoors, wherein the controller taking into consideration the intensity variations over the area now illuminated by the daylight and/or sunlight adjusts the light intensity of the directional light sources to meet the varied illumination requirement.

4. The illuminating device of claim **1**, wherein the one or more detectors detects information regarding one or more individuals within the illuminated area, said information is at least one of (i) age, (ii) sex, and (iii) recognition of an individual for matching with stored data about that individual's needs and wherein the controller adjusts the light intensity and/or spectrum of the illumination provided to the one or more individuals based on illumination requirements from at least one of (i) best practices looked up and calculated from stored data, (ii) age and/or sex of the individual, (iii) personal preferences input to the controller and stored in memory, and (iv) commands received by the controller from an input device.

5. The illuminating device of claim **1** for optimally displaying food, wherein the one or more detectors detect an identity of one or more foods in a sub-area and wherein the controller adjusts the light intensity and/or spectrum of the illumination on the one or more foods based on illumination requirements from the processor.

6. An illuminating device having automatic control of the light provided to an illuminated area comprising: a structure for incorporating illuminating device elements; one or more light sources incorporated in the structure and in communication with a power source; electronic circuitry apparatus for the controlled powering of the light source and other illuminating device elements; one or more cameras placed on the structure for detecting coordinate-specific information about the illuminated area, said camera in communication with power and control device elements; a controller integrated with the structure, in communication with the light source controlling power circuitry, said controller arranged to processes the information communicated from the camera and automatically control the light provided to the illuminated area.

7. The illumination device of claim **6**, where one or more light sources are directional wherein the one or more detectors are configured to sense a presence of glare on a person's eyes in the illuminated area, and wherein the controller is programmed to adjust an intensity of the directional light sources to reduce the glare.

8. An illuminating device which provides light to meet an illumination requirement of an illuminated area in which visual activities are performed, where different sub-areas of the illuminated area need to be illuminated at a different intensity and/or at a different spectrum than another sub-area of the illuminated area, comprising: a light fixture including a multiplicity of directional light sources including at least two directional light sources pointing in different directions thereby illuminating different sub-areas of the illuminated area, the light fixture having movable structure for aiming the directional light sources mounted thereon in a defined direction; a camera for obtaining images of the illuminated area functioning as a detector for at least one of (i) a light detector (ii) a spectrum detector, (iii) a motion detector, (iv) a measuring detector for sensing a geometry of the illuminated area, and (v) a detector for sensing at least one of work surfaces and road objects and at least one of vehicles and people; a controller for adjusting a light intensity and a direction of each of the directional light sources; a processor with stored algorithms and data for identifying at least one of (i) tasks being carried out by people, (ii) location of people, (iii) frequency of area usage by people, (iv) traffic density in the illuminated area from the sensed geometry, (v) work surfaces, (vi) road objects, people and/or vehicles, and (vii) roadway surface luminance any of which is used by said processor for determining illumination within the illuminated area using at least one of artificial intelligence, pattern recognition, video analytics, and look-up tables wherein said processer, upon calculating the required illumination parameters according to [illegible]

directs the controller to adjust the directional light sources that illuminates the specific sub-areas to meet the illumination requirements of the visual activities.

9. The illuminating device of claim **8**, adjustable by an installer based on room geometry and/or usage further comprising the light fixture having adjustable arms on which directional light sources are mounted for aiming the directional light sources within the illuminated area, where said detector and processor combination provides feedback to the installer so as to aim the light sources such that the illumination requirements can be met by the re-adjusted light source aimings.

10. The illumination device of claim **8**, wherein the controller receives real time information from the camera and wherein the processor, using image recognition capability, directs the controller to adjust at least one of (i) the intensity, (ii) the spectral light distribution and, (iii) the direction of the light sources based on at least one of (i) where people requiring illumination are located, (ii) what object the person is viewing and (iii) what visual task the person needs to perform.

11. The illumination device of claim **8**, further comprising at least one of the directional light sources mounted on the movable structure where the movement of the light source direction is automatically controlled by the controller.

12. The illumination device of claim **11**, providing a different illumination to a sub-area based on usage wherein the controller interpreting images from the camera adjusts the moveable light sources such that they provide the required illumination in a sub-area proximate to the individuals as they move around in the illuminated area.

13. The illumination device of claim **8**, wherein the illuminated area is a road and the objects include road signs.

14. The illumination device of claim **8**, further comprising at least one of the directional light sources on an automatic swivel joint and providing spot lights of limited beam angle for task lighting while other light source provide general illumination to the illuminated area.

15. The illumination device of claim **8**, further comprising a controller with communication capability to other devices, where the camera in one location obtains information and the controller process the information and communicates the camera obtained information to a second device.

16. The illumination device of claim **15**, where the illuminated area is a road and the second device to where the camera obtained information is communicated to is a lighting fixture.

17. The illumination device of claim **16**, where the processor uses information obtained from the cameras and exchanged between fixtures for identifying traffic requirements in the illuminated area and from the vehicles locations and geometry determining the illumination requirements of the illumination area thereby directing the controller to adjust the directional light sources to meet the illumination requirements.

18. The illumination device of claim **17**, wherein the controller is programmed to adjust at least one of (i) increase illumination with an approach of a vehicle, and (ii) change beam cut-off levels as the vehicle advances toward the lighting fixture to eliminate glare.

19. An automated irradiating device for providing a desired radiation to individuals within an area, comprising: at least two substantially directional heat radiation sources pointing in different directions; at least one detector for sensing a location of individuals in the area and transferring that information to a controller; wherein said controller for adjusting, adjusts at least one of a radiation intensity and a direction of the irradiation based on sensed location; the automated irradiating device further comprising one detector being a camera with a capability for transferring data to the processor arranged with image recognition algorithms for sensing any of the information selected from the list comprised of: a presence, an identity, a location, a position, an activity, and a body temperature of an individual; the controller having processing capability for using the information and determining the heating requirements of the individuals from at least one of (i) algorithms to calculate radiation parameters, (ii) stored data of heating practices, and (iii) the identified individual's stored personal preferences; whereby the desired radiation is provided proximate to individuals in the area.

20. The automated irradiating device of claim **19**, further comprising: one or more directional radiation sources capable of being moved so as to direct radiation in a defined direction; the at least one detector capable of providing information on the present location of individuals in the area; the controller programmed to process the detector information and move the radiating sources so as to follow the one or more individuals, whereby the desired radiation is provided in a sub-area substantially proximate to the individuals.

21. The irradiation device of claim **20**, further comprising: the detector being a camera capable of providing images of different parts of the body of individuals to the controller for image processing; the radiation sources being able to direct radiation to different parts of the body; and the controller further programmed to run the image recognition algorithms to identify different parts of the body, to compute the desired radiation level to the different parts of the body and to adjust the radiation from sources directed at the different parts of the body.

22. The irradiation device of claim **20**, further comprising the controller programmed to control the irradiation in time and intensity on the individual to maintain comfortable heating based on at least one of (i) best practices, (ii) feedback from the heat detector configured to detect body temperature of different parts of a body, (iii) personal preferences input to the controller and stored in memory and (iv) commands input from an input device.

23. The irradiation device of claim **20** where the irradiation instead of for heat is for therapeutic purposes and the radiation may be any of (i) UV radiation, (ii) red light therapy in the 620-660 nm range, and (iii) light therapy for SAD and other disorders selected from the group consisting of seasonal affective disorder, sleep disorders, circadian rhythm disorders, delayed sleep phase syndrome, vitamin D deficiency and skin disorders, where the controller aims the radiation sources to the location where the individual is located and controls the time and intensity of the radiation.

* * * * *

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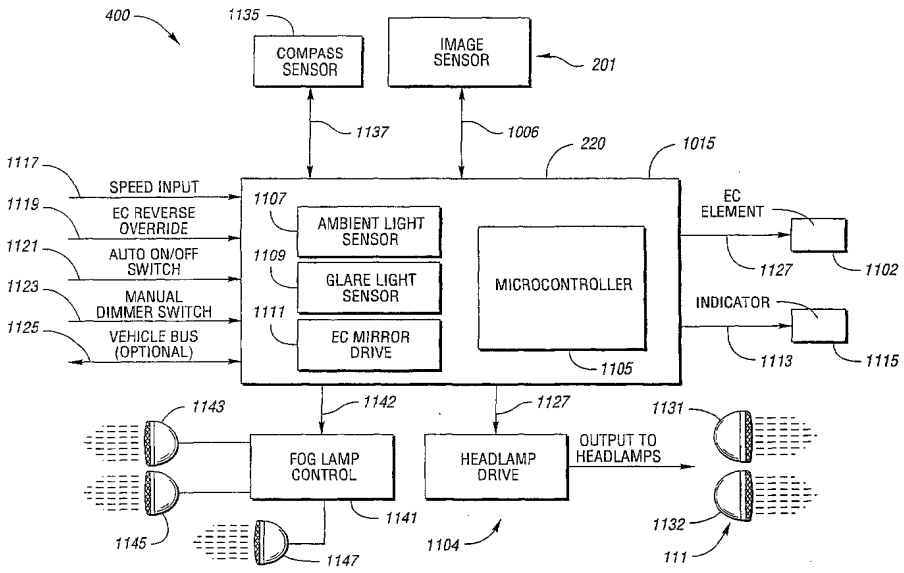
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(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR CONTROLLING EXTERIOR VEHICLE LIGHTS



(57) Abstract: A system and method of automatically controlling exterior vehicle lights includes an image sensor (201) and a controller (1105) to generate control signals. The control signals are derived based on information obtained from the image sensor as well as other detected parameters pertaining to the detected light source(s), the vehicle having the inventive control system, and the ambient environment. The control circuit may simply turn certain exterior lights on or off, or change the brightness, aim, focus, etc. to produce various beam patterns that maximize the illuminated area in front of the vehicle without causing excessive glare in the eyes of other drivers.

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SYSTEM FOR CONTROLLING EXTERIOR VEHICLE LIGHTS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention pertains to control systems for controlling the exterior lights of a vehicle and components that can be used with such a control system.

Modern automotive vehicles include a variety of different lamps to provide illumination under different operating conditions. Headlamps are typically controlled to alternately generate low beams and high beams. Low beams provide less illumination and are used at night to illuminate the forward path when other vehicles are present. High beams output significantly more light and are used to illuminate the vehicle's forward path when other vehicles are not present. Daytime running lights have also begun to experience widespread acceptance. In addition, super bright high beams have been proposed for use on fast rural roads. Foul weather lights, such as fog lights, are also commonly used. Other exterior vehicle lights include tail lights, brake lights center-mounted stop lights (CHMSLs), turn signals, back-up lights, cargo lights, puddle lights, license plate illuminators, etc.

Laws in various countries regulate vehicle illumination, and vehicle manufacturers must build cars that comply with these regulations. For example, regulations set forth by the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) regulate the light emissions of a vehicle's high beam headlamps. Various state regulations are used to control the amount of glare experienced by drivers due to preceding vehicles (other vehicles traveling in the same direction) and oncoming vehicles (vehicles traveling in the opposite direction).

Known vehicle high beam headlamp emissions in accordance with the DOT regulations limit the intensity to 40,000 cd at 0°, 10,000 cd at 3°, 3250 cd at 6°, 1500 cd at 9°, and 750 cd at 12°. An example of an emission pattern meeting this regulation is illustrated in Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,837,994, entitled CONTROL SYSTEM TO AUTOMATICALLY DIM VEHICLE HEADLAMPS, issued to Joseph Scott Stam et al. on Nov. 17, 1998. In order to avoid an illuminance of 0.1 foot candles (fc) incident on another vehicle at these angles, the vehicle high beam headlamps should be dimmed within 700 feet of another vehicle if the vehicles are at an angle of 0°, within 350 feet of another vehicle if the vehicles are at a horizontal position of 3°, and 200 feet of the other vehicle if the position of the other vehicle is at an angle of 6° to the longitudinal axis of the controlled vehicle. It can thus be seen that a preceding vehicle directly in front of the

controlled vehicle (*i.e.*, at an angle of 0°) will need to be identified well prior to the controlled vehicle catching up to the preceding vehicle, although the distance by which the controlled vehicle's headlamps must be dimmed for a preceding vehicle can be somewhat less than for an oncoming vehicle because glare from behind is usually less disruptive than oncoming glare.

In order to automatically control the vehicle headlamps, various headlamp dimmer control systems have been proposed. In order to prevent drivers of other vehicles from being subjected to excessive glare levels, an automatic headlamp dimmer system must sense both the headlamps of oncoming vehicles as well as the tail lights of preceding vehicles. Some systems that effectively detect headlamps are unable to adequately detect tail lights. Most prior systems are unable to distinguish nuisance light sources, such as reflectors, street signs, streetlights, house lights, or the like, from light sources that require headlamp control. Accordingly, these systems are subject to undesirable dimming of the high beams when no other traffic is present and turning on the high beams when other vehicles are present. In addition to the undesirable performance, it is difficult for prior systems to comply with the legal requirements as described above for high beam control while avoiding unnecessary dimming of the vehicle headlamps.

Fog lights are examples of other vehicle lights that are difficult to control automatically. Vehicles are known to include forward and rearward directed fog lights. In Europe, it is known to provide a very bright red or white light on the back of the vehicle, which is illuminated under foggy conditions. The fog lights must be turned ON as soon as the fog reduces visibility by a predetermined amount and must turn OFF when the fog drops below that density. A reliable method of automatically controlling such fog lights has not been available.

Accordingly, there is a need for a more reliable and intelligent automatic lamp control for a vehicle.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to one aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control exterior lights of a controlled vehicle. The control system comprises an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, and a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from the imaging system and for controlling the exterior lights to change their beam pattern in response to objects detected

in the processed scene, the control circuit disables automatic control of the exterior lights in response to activation of the vehicle windshield wipers.

According to another aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control exterior lights of a controlled vehicle. The control system comprises an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, and a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from the imaging system and for controlling the exterior lights to change their beam pattern in response to objects detected in the processed scene, the control circuit disables automatic control of the exterior lights when the vehicle windshield defroster is operating at full speed.

According to another aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control exterior lights of a controlled vehicle. The control system comprises an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, and a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from the imaging system and for controlling the exterior lights to change their beam pattern in response to objects detected in the processed scene, the control circuit disables automatic control of the exterior lights when snow is detected.

According to yet another embodiment, a method of detecting snowfall or fog outside a vehicle is accomplished. The method comprises the steps of: sensing light levels forward above the vehicle; comparing the relative brightness of the light levels forward and above the vehicle; and determining that it is snowing or foggy when a ratio of the relative brightness forward of the vehicle to that above the vehicle reaches a threshold.

According to another aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control the headlamps of a vehicle. The control system comprises an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside of the vehicle, and a control circuit for varying the beam pattern of daytime running lamps in response to the ambient light level sensed by the ambient light sensor.

According to another aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control the brightness of the tail lights of a vehicle. The control system comprises an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside of the vehicle, and a control circuit for varying the brightness of the tail lights in response to the ambient light level sensed by the ambient light sensor.

According to yet another aspect of the invention, a headlamp control system is provided for controlling the headlamps of a controlled vehicle that comprises: an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle; a control circuit

coupled to the imaging system for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from the imaging system and for controlling the headlamps to vary a beam pattern of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images; and a user input mechanism coupled to the control circuit for allowing a user to adjust a sensitivity at which the control circuit will control the headlamps in response to light sources within the images.

According to yet another aspect of the invention, a headlamp control system is provided for controlling the headlamps of a controlled vehicle that comprises an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle and to detect an ambient light level outside the vehicle, and a control circuit coupled to the imaging system for determining an ambient light level outside the vehicle, for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from the imaging system, and for controlling the headlamps to vary a beam pattern of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images when the ambient light level is above a threshold level.

According to another aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control exterior lights of a vehicle. The control system comprises an image array sensor including a plurality of pixels, an optical system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle onto the image array sensor, the optical system including a forwardmost surface, and a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from the image array sensor and for controlling the exterior lights in response to objects detected in the processed scene, wherein the optical system includes a hydrophilic coating on the forwardmost surface.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, a vehicle control system is provided to control the brightness of continuously variable headlamps that have a brightness that varies continuously between a high beam state and a low beam state. The control system comprises an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, a control circuit for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from the imaging system and for controlling the brightness of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images, and an indicator coupled to the control circuit and positioned inside the vehicle for indicating to the driver the relative brightness of the headlamps.

According to another aspect of the invention, an imaging system for a vehicle is provided that comprises an image sensor having an array of pixels and at least one other

component, and an optical baffle disposed between the images sensor and a scene to be imaged for preventing light from the scene from reaching the at least one other component.

According to a further aspect of the invention, a headlamp control system for a vehicle is provided that comprises an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, a switching mechanism for manual input of a driver's selection of a feature affecting the control of the vehicle headlamps, and a control circuit coupled to the switching mechanism and the imaging system for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from the imaging system and for controlling the brightness of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images and as a function of the status of the switching mechanism.

Another aspect of the present invention is to provide a headlamp control system for a vehicle that comprises a control circuit coupled to the vehicle headlamps for fading the headlamps of the vehicle to an off state in response to the turning off of the vehicle ignition or exiting the vehicle.

According to another aspect of the invention, a control system is provided to control exterior lights of a vehicle. The control system comprises an image array sensor including a plurality of pixels, an optical system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle onto the image array sensor, the optical system including a forwardmost surface, and a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from the image array sensor and for controlling the exterior lights in response to objects detected in the processed scene, the optical system includes a photocatalytic coating on the forwardmost surface.

Another aspect of the present invention is to provide a control system to control the headlamps of a vehicle. The control system comprises a manually actuated switch mechanism for receiving input from a driver to temporarily increase the brightness of the vehicle headlamps in a flash-to-pass state, an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside the vehicle, and a control circuit coupled to the ambient light sensor and the manually actuated switch mechanism for varying the beam pattern of the headlamps during the flash-to-pass state in response to the ambient light level sensed by the ambient light sensor.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, a control system is provided to control the headlamps of a vehicle where the vehicle has a microwave receiver for receiving signals from satellites. The control system comprises a control circuit for

receiving signals from the microwave receiver indicative of the location of the vehicle, the control circuit controls the headlamps to limit the perceived brightness of the headlamps from exceeding a predetermined level less than their capacity when the vehicle is travelling on a residential street.

These and other features, advantages, and objects of the present invention will be further understood and appreciated by those skilled in the art by reference to the following specification, claims, and appended drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The subject matter that is regarded as the invention is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the claim portion that concludes the specification. The invention, together with further objects and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, where like numerals represent like components, and in which:

Fig. 1 illustrates vehicles traveling on a common road;

Figs. 2a and 2b illustrate an optical sensor system, Fig. 2b showing a perspective view and Fig. 2a showing a cross section of the optical sensor system taken along plane 2a-2a in Fig. 2b;

Fig. 3 is a plan view illustrating an image sensor used in the optical sensor system according to Figs. 2a and 2b;

Fig. 4 is a top plan view illustrating a lens structure used in the optical sensor system according to Figs. 2a and 2b;

Fig. 5 is a side elevation view illustrating the lens structure according to Fig. 4;

Fig. 6 is a graph illustrating wave transmissivity as a function of light wavelength for the lens;

Fig. 7 shows a light sensitive surface of the image sensor and illustrates the regions of the image array which are impacted by the light from each of the lenses;

Fig. 8 is a cross section illustrating another image sensor assembly taken along the same plane as the assembly in Fig. 2a;

Fig 9 is a cross section illustrating yet another light sensor assembly taken along the same plane as the assembly in Fig. 2a;

Fig. 10 is a partial cross section of a rearview mirror assembly illustrating an optical sensor system;

Fig. 11 is a circuit schematic illustrating a circuit for an optical sensor system and an electrochromic mirror;

Fig. 12 is a circuit schematic illustrating a headlamp drive for the circuit according to Fig. 11;

Fig. 13 is a circuit schematic illustrating a microcontroller circuit for the circuit according to Fig. 11;

Fig. 14 is a flow chart illustrating operation of an electrochromic mirror and headlamp control;

Fig. 15 is a flow chart illustrating operations to acquire and analyze an image;

Fig. 16 is a flow chart illustrating operations to analyze an image and find a light source;

Fig. 17a is a flow chart illustrating a seed fill algorithm;

Fig. 17b illustrates a pixel array impacted by a light source;

Fig. 18 is a flow chart illustrating operation to determine if light sources are oncoming or preceding vehicles;

Fig. 19 is a state diagram illustrating the duty cycle associated with states for a variable high beam lamp;

Fig. 20 illustrates operation rules for changes of state in Fig. 19;

Fig. 21 is a flow chart illustrating operation to provide speed varying thresholds;

Fig. 22 is a chart illustrating the different regions of the image array;

Fig. 23 is a flow chart illustrating operation of the microcontroller to shift the regions in Fig. 22;

Fig. 24 is a front perspective view illustrating an image sensor assembly including an electronically alterable filter;

Fig. 25 is a side elevation view of the liquid crystal filter in the image sensor assembly according to Fig. 24;

Fig. 26a is an exploded perspective view illustrating an LED headlamp;

Fig. 26b is a fragmentary cross section taken along plane 26b-26b in Fig. 26a;

Fig. 26c is a front plan view illustrating an alternate embodiment of an LED lamp;

Fig. 26d is a fragmentary cross section taken along plane 26d-26d in Fig. 26c;

Fig. 27 is a top, front perspective view of an LED headlamp for projecting light in more than one horizontal direction;

Fig. 28 is a top, front perspective view of an LED headlamp for projecting light in more than one vertical direction;

Figs. 29a-29d illustrates a method of manufacturing surface mounted filters for an image sensor;

Fig. 30 is a chart illustrating the wavelengths passed by a red filter surface mounted to an image sensor;

Fig. 31 is a chart illustrating the wavelengths passed by a cyan filter surface mounted to an image sensor;

Fig. 32 illustrates another image sensor assembly;

Fig. 33 illustrates an electrical system including a wave sensitive headlamp control;

Fig. 34 is a circuit schematic illustrating an alternative circuit for an optical sensor system and an electrochromic mirror;

Fig. 35 is a state diagram illustrating a first control scheme for manually or automatically controlling the vehicle headlamps in response to activation of various manual switches;

Fig. 36 is a state diagram illustrating a second control scheme for manually or automatically controlling the vehicle headlamps in response to activation of various manual switches;

Fig. 37 is a state diagram illustrating a third control scheme for manually or automatically controlling the vehicle headlamps in response to activation of various manual switches;

Fig. 38 illustrates an exemplary indicator for use with the headlamp control system of the present invention;

Fig. 39 is a representative pictorial view of an imaged scene taken in several superimposed frames;

Fig. 40 is a functional block diagram of one embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 41 is front elevational view of a mirror mount accessory housing according to another embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 42 is top plan view of the mirror mount accessory housing shown in Fig. 41;

Fig. 43 is a cross-sectional view of the mirror mount accessory housing shown in Figs. 41 and 42 taken along line 43-43′ in Fig. 42;

Fig. 44 is an exploded perspective view of the mirror mount accessory housing;

Fig. 45 is rear elevational view of the mirror mount accessory housing;

Fig. 46 is a side elevational view of the mirror mount accessory housing with the housing cover removed;

Fig. 47 is a top plan view of the mirror mount accessory housing with the housing cover removed;

Fig. 48 is a front elevational view of the mirror mount accessory housing with the housing cover removed;

Fig. 49 is a rear elevational view of the mirror mount accessory housing with the housing cover removed; and

Figs. 50A-50C are pictorial representations of various illumination patterns produced by exterior lights of a vehicle.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally pertains to a control system for controlling the exterior lights of a vehicle. As noted above, such exterior lights may include headlamps, tail lights, foul weather lights such as fog lights, brake lights, center-mounted stop lights (CHMSLs), turn signals, back-up lights, cargo lights, puddle lights, license plate illuminators, etc. The headlamps may be operated in several different modes including conventional low-beam and high-beam states. They may also be operated as daytime running lights, and additionally as super-bright high beams in those countries where they are permitted. The headlamp brightness may also be continuously varied between the low, high, and super-high states. Separate lights may be provided for obtaining each of these headlamp states or the actual brightness of the headlamps may be varied to provide these different headlamp states. In either case, the "perceived brightness" of the headlamps is varied. As used herein, the term "perceived brightness" means the brightness of the headlamps as perceived by an observer outside the vehicle. Most typically, such observers will be drivers or passengers in a preceding vehicle or in a vehicle traveling along the same street in the opposite direction. Ideally, the exterior lights are controlled such that if an observer is located in a vehicle within a "glare area" relative to the vehicle (*i.e.*, the area in which the observer would perceive the brightness of the exterior lights as causing excessive glare), the beam illumination pattern is varied such that the observer is no longer in the glare area. The perceived brightness and/or glare area of the headlamps (and/or other exterior lights) may be varied by changing the illumination output of one or more lights forming the headlamps, by steering one or more lights to change the aim of one or more of the lights forming the headlamps, activating or deactivating some or all of the lights, altering the illumination pattern forward of the vehicle, or a combination of the above. Fig. 50A shows a typical low beam pattern as would be used when other vehicles are nearby and forward of the controlled vehicle 5000. Fig. 50B shows an examplary composite beam pattern including both high and low beam patterns and side bending light patterns, which may be individually activated as the vehicle 5000 approaches a turn. Fig.

50C illustrates another composite beam pattern including a low beam pattern and an intermediate, side-aimed pattern, which may be produced by changing the focus or aim of the high beams as well as the brightness of the high beams. The composite beam pattern shown in Fig. 50C is useful when another vehicle is approaching in an oncoming and adjacent lane. As will be apparent to those skilled in the art, a large number of other beam patterns can be achieved using known headlamp mechanisms. Other mechanisms for adjusting the perceived brightness and glare area of the headlamps will also be apparent to those skilled in the art.

Although the present invention primarily addresses the control of the vehicle headlamps, embodiments are described below for controlling the tail lights and foul weather lights. In some embodiments, the present invention is generally described as controlling the "exterior lights," which broadly includes any exterior lighting on the vehicle. For example, the present invention may be used in some circumstances to control the perceived brightness of a turn signal mounted in an outside rearview mirror assembly so as to provide sufficient light output for signaling a driver in another vehicle without causing excessive glare in the eyes of the driver of the vehicle having the signal mirrors. Also, the present invention may be employed to control the instrument panel lights as well as other interior display lights based upon the sensed ambient light. Other examples will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

A controlled vehicle 100 (Fig. 1) having an automatic headlamp dimmer includes an optical sensor system 102 for detecting the headlamps 104 of an oncoming vehicle 105 and the tail lights 108 of a preceding vehicle 110. The headlamps 111 of the controlled vehicle 100 are controlled automatically to avoid shining the high beams, or bright lights, directly into the eyes of a driver of oncoming vehicle 105 or by reflection into the eyes of the driver of the preceding vehicle 110. The optical sensor assembly 102 is illustrated mounted in the windshield area of the vehicle, but those skilled in the art will recognize that the sensor could be mounted at other locations that provide the sensor with a view of the scene in front of the vehicle. One particularly advantageous mounting location is high on the vehicle windshield to provide a clear view, which view can be achieved by mounting the optical sensor assembly 102 in a rearview mirror mount, a vehicle headliner, a visor, or in an overhead console. Other views that may be advantageously employed include mounting the optical sensor assembly 102 on the A-pilar, the dashboard, or at any other location providing a forward viewing area. However, the most advantageous

mounting locations are those that position the image sensor to view a forward scene through an area kept clean by the vehicle's windshield wipers.

With reference to Figs. 2a and 2b, the optical sensor assembly 102 includes an electronic image sensor 201 and an optical system to direct light onto the image sensor 201. The image sensor 201 generally comprises an array of light sensitive components and associated circuitry to output electronic pixel light level signals responsive to light impacting on the surface of the image sensor 201. The optical system generally contains four components: lens structure 202; aperture stop member 203; far field baffle 204; and optional infrared filter 206. The optical system controls the scene viewed by the image sensor 201. In particular, the optical system focuses light rays 205 passing through opening 207 of the far field baffle onto the array 201 contained within the image sensor assembly 201.

THE IMAGE SENSOR

The configuration of the image sensor 201 is illustrated in Fig. 3. The image sensor includes an image array 301 (Fig. 3) that can be made from any one of a variety of sensors, such as CMOS image sensors, charge coupled device (CCD) image sensors, or any other suitable image sensor. In one embodiment, the image sensor is a CMOS photogate active pixel image sensor. A CMOS photogate active pixel image sensor is described in U.S. Patent No. 5,471,515, entitled ACTIVE PIXEL SENSOR WITH INTER-PIXEL CHARGE TRANSFER, issued to Eric R. Fossum et al., on November 28, 1995. Sensor systems including arrays are disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/448,364, entitled CONTROL CIRCUIT FOR IMAGE SENSORS, filed November 23, 1999, by Jon Bechtel et al.; U.S. Patent Application No. 08/933,210, entitled CONTROL CIRCUIT FOR IMAGE SENSORS, filed on September 16, 1997, by Jon Bechtel et al., now U.S. Patent No. 5,990,469; and U.S. Patent Application No. 08/831,232, filed April 2, 1997, entitled CONTROL SYSTEM TO AUTOMATICALLY DIM VEHICLE HEADLAMPS, by Joseph Stam et al., now U.S. Patent No. 5,837,994.

The array 301 may for example comprise photogate active pixels, such as 10 to 50 μm pixels. It is advantageous for the array to be a low resolution array, which is an array that has a resolution of less than 7000 pixels per square millimeter and more preferably less than 2500 pixels per square millimeter. The array may have 25μm or larger photogate active pixels. In particular, the array may include 30 μm or larger pixels arranged in a grid smaller than 200 rows by 200 columns, and may advantageously comprise a rectangular

array having 64 columns and 80 rows of pixels. Such an image sensor is described in detail in U.S. Patent No. 5,471,515. The optically active region of array 301 is approximately 1.9 mm in the X direction by 2.4 mm in the Y direction. Using such a low resolution image sensor array to monitor the forward field of the controlled vehicle 100 results in a relatively low resolution sensor system that can be supported by high speed processing in a cost effective manner while enabling a vehicle headlamp control to be highly reliable and accurate. The low resolution array reduces the memory and processor requirements of associated circuitry. The use of such larger pixels increases sensitivity and thus allows the use of slower, and thus lower cost, optics. However, one skilled in the art will recognize that the use of a higher resolution array with smaller pixels may be advantageous to reduce the area of the sensor array and thus potentially reduce the cost at the array itself. In the case where a high resolution image sensor is employed, faster components and higher quality optics may be required to accommodate the high resolution image sensor. With advances in optical manufacturing, such optics may become cost effective such that use of a higher resolution array becomes economically practical. Additionally, it is expected that in future years the cost of a processor and memory required to process an image containing more pixels will be reduced making a higher resolution system feasible. A higher resolution array may improve the ability to detect distant tail lights. However, at this time it is preferred to use a low resolution array with relatively few pixels to maintain the economy of the invention and thus enable widespread acceptance in the market place.

An image sensor and control circuit therefore will be described in greater detail herein below, and such a system is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,990,469.

In addition to the array 301, the image sensor 201 includes: serial timing and control circuit 309; column output circuit 302; bias generating digital-to-analog converters (DACs) 305; flash analog-to-digital converters (ADCs) 304; and analog amplifier 303. Serial timing and control circuitry 309 provides a high-speed synchronous bi-directional interface between a microcontroller 1105 (Fig. 11) and the image sensor 201. As described in U.S. Patent No. 5,990,469, the control circuit 309 allows the microcontroller 1105 to output parameters that control the selection of pixels exposed for measurement (*i.e.*, selects the area of array 301 exposed; which area is referred to herein as the "window"); exposure time which affects sensitivity; bias voltages generated by the bias voltage generation DACs 305; and the analog gain of amplifier 303. Additional features include the ability to expose two windows simultaneously, using the same or different gain

settings for the amplifier 303 for pixels of the respective windows, and the ability to acquire a sequence of multiple frames. The control circuit 309 also enables a sleep feature that disables the analog components of the image sensor assembly 201 to reduce power consumption when the image sensor is not in use. The image sensor also includes: a power supply input Vdd; a ground input; serial data bus input/output (I/O) 308; serial data clock I/O 311; slave select input 307; and clock input 306.

THE LENS STRUCTURE

Lens structure 202 (Fig. 2a) includes lenses 208 and 209. Although two lenses are disclosed, the image sensor 201 could use a single lens or more than two lenses. The two lenses 208,209 are used to produce two different images of the same scene through different color filters to assist in properly discriminating headlamps from tail lights using the image sensor 201 as described below and in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,837,994 and 5,990,469. The image system allows the acquisition of an image of a scene through at least one color filter 208, 209. In one embodiment, the lens structure is constructed to image the forward scene onto one region of the image array 301 through a first color filter and to image the forward scene onto another region of the image array through a second filter. For example, filter 209 (Figs. 2a and 2b) may be a red filter and filter 208 may be either a blue filter, a green filter, a cyan filter, a clear filter (which is for example the absence of a color filter), or any other suitable filter. There are various places within the optical system that the filters could be incorporated other than the lens 208, 209, such as on the image sensor surface. However, incorporating the filters into the lens structure has the advantage that the light is not focused at the point of the filter. Locating the filter in the image plane, *i.e.*, on the sensor, would leave an organic filter susceptible to thermal damage should the sun fall within the sensor's field of view such that the sun's rays are focused on the filters. Typically, filter materials are much more vulnerable to thermal damage than the image sensor itself. A possible exception would be dichroic interference filters, which are highly resistant to thermal damage. A method by which such thermal resistant filters can be deposited onto a semiconductor image sensor surface is described in greater detail herein below with respect to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

An example of a filter that could be incorporated on the image sensor surface is a dichroic filter array of the type disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,711,889 to Philip E. Buchsbaum. The dichroic filter array disclosed in this U.S. patent is resistant to thermal damage and therefore would be suitable for use in an image sensor used for detecting light sources in the control of a vehicle's headlamps. Such a dichroic filter array may include a

checkerboard or mosaic pattern may be deposited on to the array such that neighboring pixels are exposed to separate bands of light. A technique for depositing interference filters of different colors onto neighboring pixels is disclosed in the above-referenced U.S. Patent No. 5,711,889. In one embodiment, neighboring pixels are alternatively coated with a red filter (R) and no filter (clear (C)) as illustrated in the table below.

R	C	R	C
C	R	C	R
R	C	R	C
C	R	C	R

In this embodiment, the optics do not include the lens structure and color filters discussed above, since the color filtering function is performed by the filter pattern. Likewise, the optics do not need to separately image the forward scene onto two portions of the image sensor. Thus, the twice as much of the image sensor array may be used to image a single image of the forward scene. It should be noted however, that in accordance with yet another embodiment of the present invention, the optics may still image the forward scene onto two separate portions of the image sensor array as discussed above, but instead of incorporating the color filter into the lens, the color filter may be provided as a patterned or non-patterned multi-layer interference filter on the sensor.

The optics in this embodiment are slightly defocused such that the spot size from a distant point light source covers at least two pixels. In this way, an accurate reading of the red component of the object can be determined. The inventors have discovered that common color filter array technologies, typically employing polymer filters, will not withstand direct focused sunlight. In many automotive applications, the sun may be focused onto the array if a vehicle is traveling or parked such that the sun is within the field of view of the camera. Interference filters are far more robust and reflect the unwanted spectral bands of light rather than absorb them. As a result, their use overcomes the limitations of the prior filtering technologies and allows the construction of an automotive camera. These filters can be used not only with cameras which are used in applications which control vehicle equipment, but also in applications where images are acquired and displayed to the driver for visual assistance.

In another embodiment, three-color interference filters can be used to construct a red, green, and blue (RGB) pixel array (or their complements) as illustrated in the table below.

G	R	G	R
B	G	B	G
G	R	G	R
B	G	B	G

A full color value for each pixel is determined by using the color of the current pixel and interpolating the other two colors from neighboring pixels with different filter colors. Techniques for performing this interpolation are well known in the art. In a simpler scheme, groups of four pixels are treated as one "super pixel." The lens is defocused enough such that the image of a point light source is blurred over a 2 x 2 block of pixels. For each block of 2 x 2 pixels, the red, green, and blue color components are determined from the individual pixels. This data can be represented either as three separate values or as an intensity and color value.

The use of a 2x2 super pixel simplifies processing and reduces the total number of values stored. This technique can be combined with any of the other techniques in an application requiring color imaging. For an application such as a high beam headlamp control system, traditional color interpolation can be used near the center of the image for increased resolution and the technique of using super pixels can be used away from center. Super pixels larger than 2 x 2 blocks can be used where substantially decreased resolution is acceptable.

The lens structure 202 will now be described in greater detail with reference to Figs. 2a, 4, 5, and 7. The lens structure 202 includes a first lens 208 and a second lens 209 that focus light from other vehicles onto the image array 301 (Fig. 7). The two lens elements 208, 209 image the forward scene onto different respective regions 702, 703 of the image sensor image array 301. Each lens element 208, 209 contains a spectral band pass filter, such that the forward image scene projected onto the respective regions of the image array 301 each represents a different color component of the image, where it is advantageous to determine the relative color of objects in the field of view. It is particularly advantageous for the lens elements 208 (Fig. 2a) and 209 to comprise cyan

and red filters, respectively, as mentioned above and shown in Figs. 4 and 5. Alternatively, it may be advantageous for lens 209 to contain a red spectral filter and for lens 208 to be clear.

The sensor system may for example employ lens elements 208 and 209 that are 0.5 mm to 2.5 mm in diameter, and may advantageously comprise lenses that are 1.0 to 2.5 mm in diameter, such as being 2.2 mm in diameter. In the Y direction, the lens center axes C_1 and C_2 may be spaced by 0.6 to 1.6 mm, and may for example be spaced by 1.1 to 1.4 mm, and may advantageously be spaced 1.3 mm in the Y direction (as indicated in Fig. 5). A portion of the lens may be truncated on one side to achieve this spacing. The lens center C_1, C_2 may be aligned in the X direction as shown in Fig. 4, or be offset. Lens element 208 may for example include a cyan filter with an aspheric lens having a curvature of 0.446 mm^{-1} and a conic constant of -0.5 to achieve the desired focal length. Lens element 209 may in contrast, be a red filter, aspheric lens with a curvature of 0.450 mm^{-1} and a conic constant of –0.5 to achieve the same desired focal length. At the center, each lens is 0.5 to 1.5 mm thick, and may advantageously be 1.0mm thick. The difference in curvature of the two lenses compensates for the dispersion in the lens material and optimizes each lens for the spectral band passed by the filter. These parameters result in a lens with an effective focal length of 4.5 mm and thus have an F# of 2. It will be recognized that these optics are exemplary, and that other optics could be provided, such that the focal length and F# could be different.

The lens structure 202 may be molded out of a light-transmissive plastic such as acrylic, manufactured from glass, or may be produced by any other suitable construction. Where the lenses 208, 209 are molded from plastic, the filters may be formed integrally with the plastic by the inclusion of dyes within the material or they may be molded of a clear transparent material, particularly where the image sensor has a surface mounted filter as described herein below. An example of an acrylic material, which includes a red filter dye, is part number RD-130 available form OptiColor, Inc. of Huntington Beach, California, USA. An acrylic material incorporating a cyan filter is OptiColor part number BL-152. The spectral transmission of these two materials is shown in Fig. 6. Using the optional infrared filter 206 will remove light with wavelengths greater than approximately 700 nm.

The lens structure 202 including integral filters may be manufactured using a bi-color injection molding process. First one-half of the lens, for example the red half including lens 209, is molded in a tool containing features to form the red half of the lens.

Next, the molded red half of the lens is inserted into a tool containing features for the cyan half of the lens structure 202 in addition to features to hold the red lens 209. The cyan lens 208 half of the lens structure 202 is then injection molded against the red lens 209 half forming one bi-color lens. Alternatively, each of the lenses 208 and 209 can be provided by lens elements such as disclosed in copending U.S. Patent No. 6,130,421, entitled IMAGING SYSTEM FOR VEHICLE HEADLAMP CONTROL, filed June 9, 1998, by Jon H. Bechtel et al.

While red and cyan filtered lens elements are used in the illustrated embodiment, other combinations of lenses may also be suitable for this application. For example, it is possible to replace cyan lens element 208 with a clear lens. Also, it is possible to use three lenses with respective color filters, and in particular red, green, and blue filters, to obtain a full color image. Such an arrangement could use a sequence of three lenses aligned along the Y axis of Fig. 4, with one lens positioned on the center axis and the other two lenses positioned adjacent this center lens. The spacing of the lenses might advantageously be uniform to provide uniformly spaced regions on the light sensitive surface of the image array 301. The red and cyan filter colors described above are thus only presented herein as an example, and any combination of filters which pass at least two isolated or overlapping spectral bands of light and allow for the distinction of tail lights from headlamps may be used. Those skilled in the art will recognize that other methods can be used to incorporate the filters, such as screen printing dyes applied to the flat back surface of the lens structure 202, or application of a filter material to the surface of a clear lens structure. Additionally, an advantageous system using a single lens is described herein below with reference to Figs. 24 and 25.

THE APERTURE STOP

Aperture stop 203 comprises an opaque member, including apertures 240 (Fig. 2a) and 242, positioned over lenses 208, 209. The aperture stop 203 can be manufactured of any suitable material, such as molded plastic, and it can be painted or otherwise treated so as to block the passage of light if the material of which the plastic is manufactured is not opaque. Aperture stop 203 defines the apertures 240, 242 for lens elements 208 and 209. Aperture stop 203 also prevents passage of stray light through regions of lens structure 202 other than the lens elements 208 and 209. It will be recognized that the aperture stop 203 can be paint applied directly to the surface of lens structure 202, and optionally to the sidewalls of light sensor assembly 250, such that the paint blocks passage of stray light through regions of lens 202 other than the lens elements 208 and 209. The aperture stop

may also be stamped from a rigid material such as Mylar and placed over the lens structure. Such an aperture stop may include a pair of registration holes for engaging posts extending from the lens structure such that the aperture stop may be properly positioned relative to the lens structure with the apertures 240, 242 aligned with the corresponding lens elements 208, 209 of lens structure 202.

The aperture stop and/or the window may define a transparent window in an otherwise opaque mask in which the transition from the opaque region to the transparent region may be graded. By providing such a gradient, spatial thresholding of the received and processed image may be readily accomplished. The purpose for such spatial thresholding is discussed in more detail below.

THE FAR FIELD BAFFLE

The far field baffle 204 (Figs. 2a and 2b) is an opaque enclosure to be positioned over the image sensor 201. The baffle includes an opening 207, which is the sole light passage into the image sensor. The illustrated far field baffle 204 is a generally rectangular box including four sidewalls 215 (only two of the four being visible in Fig. 2b), an end wall 217 including opening 207, and an open end 219. The open end is secured to the support 220 on which image sensor 201 is carried. The support 220 may be, for example, a circuit board or housing, and is preferably opaque to block the passage of light into the chamber defined by the far field baffle. The walls 215, 217 of the far field baffle 204 are opaque, and may be of any suitable construction such as stamped from metal, molded from plastic, or the like. If the material from which the walls are made is not opaque, it may be painted or otherwise treated to block the admission of light. The far field baffle defines the forward scene viewed by image sensor array 208. The side walls 215 and end wall 217 prevent light at angles outside of the desired field of view from entering and are also used to keep light input through one lens from crossing over to the region of the array reserved for the other lens. The far field baffle aperture 207 is ideally about 4-6 focal lengths, or approximately 18 mm in the illustrated embodiment, from the front of the lens (for the sake of clarity, the figures of the application are not to scale). The field of view through aperture 207, aperture stop 203, and lenses 208 and 209, in the illustrated embodiment, is about 10° in the vertical direction and 25° in the horizontal direction in front of the vehicle. This field of view can be achieved with a rectangular or elliptical far field baffle opening 207 that is 6 to 7mm in the Y direction and 9 to 10 mm in the X direction, in the above described embodiment.

In particular the far field baffle 204 has an opening 207 in an end wall 217. The sidewalls 215 of the image array sensor extend orthogonally from the end wall 217. The walls 215, 217 may be formed integrally in a molding or stamping process or they may be joined after construction using an adhesive, fasteners or the like. The far field baffle is preferably a black plastic molded member, although it may be provided using any material that will absorb most or all of the light striking the sidewalls. By providing wall surfaces on the inside of the far field baffle that absorb light, the walls will not reflect light that enters though opening 207 onto the image array sensor 201. In the illustrated embodiment, the baffle is rectangular, but those skilled in the art will recognize that the baffle could be square, cylindrical, or any other suitable shape. An imaging system including a far field baffle is described in co-pending U.S. Patent No. 6,130,421, entitled IMAGING SYSTEM FOR VEHICLE HEADLAMP CONTROL, filed on June 9, 1998, by Jon H. Bechtel et al.

Far field baffle 204 and aperture stop 203 preferably configured to prevent light from reaching components other than image sensor array 201 that may be mounted on circuit board 221. Certain sensors, such as CMOS sensors, often include other components besides the image sensor array on the printed circuit board that may be damaged from exposure to light. Additional baffle structures may be incorporated for this purpose.

INFRARED FILTER

The far field baffle holds an optional infrared filter 206 (Fig. 2a). Infrared filter 206 prevents light of wavelengths longer than about 700 nm from being imaged by the optical system. This is advantageous as light above 700 nm (Fig. 6) will pass through the red and cyan filters. By removing this light, the only light that will be considered is visible light in the pass band of the red and blue filters. The infrared filter has become more important due to the recent commercialization of LED tail lights. Because incandescent light sources emit infrared light while LED light sources do not, the infrared filter is desirable to balance out the detected brightness of these two types of light sources.

Infrared filters are available from Optical Coating Laboratories of Santa Rosa, California, and are called Wide Band Hot Mirrors. The infrared filter 206 may be mounted to the end wall 217 using an adhesive, mechanical fasteners such as a snap connector, or the like, and may seal off the chamber within the far field baffle to prevent dust and moisture from entering the system and degrading the performance of the system.

Alternatively infrared filter 206 may be incorporated as a dye within the lens, a coating on the lens, a coating on the image sensor surface, a lid on an image sensor package, or elsewhere in the image sensor assembly. If the IR filter is not such that it can be used to close the opening 217 of far field baffle 204, it may be desirable to place a clear window, such as glass, plastic, or the like in the opening 217 to prevent dust from entering into the interior of the far field baffle and interfering with the performance of the sensor system 102.

HYDROPHILIC/PHOTOCATALYTIC COATINGS

In addition to functioning as an infrared filter, filter 206 serves to prevent debris and liquid from reaching the image sensor assembly through opening 207. In the event an infrared filter is not utilized, a transparent window may be used in its place for this purpose.

Whether an infrared filter 206 or window is utilized, it is desirable to keep liquid drops from attaching to the outer surface of filter/window 206 within opening 207 since such liquid drops distort the image that is received and processed by the image sensor and because such liquid drops tend to dry and leave spots on the outer surface of filter/window 206. Such liquid drops may form on filter/window 206 when, for example, an individual sprays a cleaning fluid on the inside of the windshield, which is in close proximity to the outer surface of filter/window 206. It is very possible that the individual cleaning the windshield would forget to wipe the cleaning fluid from the filter/window of the image sensor, thus leaving a fine mist of water droplets over the surface of the filter/window, which would blur the images obtained by the image sensor.

To overcome this problem, the present invention may employ a hydrophilic coating on the outer surface of filter/window 206. Hydrophilic coatings have a porous outer layer(s) that absorb the water or other liquid uniformly across its surface such that water droplets/spots do not form on its surface. One problem many such hydrophilic coatings experience is that the pores in the outer layer(s) may become clogged by oil, grease, or other contaminants thereby eliminating the effectiveness of the hydrophilic coating. To overcome that problem, a photocatalytic layer may be used in conjunction with the hydrophilic coating. Such photocatalytic layers break down the oil, grease, or other contaminants within the hydrophilic layer when exposed to ultraviolet light. This tends to clear the pores in the hydrophilic layer of the contaminant and allow it to operate effectively as a hydrophilic layer. Examples of hydrophilic/photocatalytic coatings that may be employed for this purpose are disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/602,919

entitled ELECTRO-OPTIC DEVICE HAVING A SELF-CLEANING HYDROPHILIC COATING filed on June 23, 2000, by William L. Tonar et al.

ASSEMBLY OF THE IMAGE SENSOR ASSEMBLY

Assembly of the image sensor will now be described with reference to image sensor assembly 801 of Fig. 8, which is identical to the image sensor assembly 250 except for the gel 805 in image sensor assembly 801. The image sensor 201, lens structure 202, and aperture stop 203 are combined to form an integral image sensor assembly 250 (Fig. 2) or 801 (Fig. 8). The image sensor 201, which is advantageously a single integrated circuit (IC), is attached to printed circuit board 220 by any suitable conventional means such as using chip-on-board technology. Connections to the image sensor chip are made by any suitable means, such as wire bonds 804. The bonded IC is then optionally covered with an optically clear stress relieving gel 805. Examples of materials that can be used for this coating are Silicon Semi-Gel type C from Transene Co. of Danvers, Massachusetts, or Dielectric Gel 3-6211 from Dow Corning Corp. of Midland, Michigan. The coated IC is then encapsulated in a hard optically clear enclosure 802, which may for example comprise epoxy. The epoxy is formed into a desired shape and may form, for example, a cube. The cube can be dimensioned to occupy a very small volume, and may for example have length and width dimensions of about 1 cm on a side, and a thickness of about 5mm. The enclosure 802 (Fig. 8) may be selected to have approximately the same index of refraction as the stress relieving gel 805 to prevent any refraction at the interface between these two materials. Examples of suitable epoxies are: Epo-Tek 301-2FL from Epoxy Technology, Inc. of Billerica, Massachusetts, Epoxy 50 from Transene Co, or Dexter-Hysol OS 1900, or 300H from Nitto Denko Corporation. If the coefficient of thermal expansion of the enclosure 802 is sufficiently low that its expansion and contraction will not break wire bonds 804 at the expected operating temperature range for the image array sensor 201, stress-relieving gel 805 can be omitted, as is shown by enclosure 230 over wire bonds 234 in image sensor assembly 250 in Fig. 2a.

Lens structure 202 is attached to the enclosure 802 (Fig. 8) or enclosure 230 (Fig. 2) using a UV curable optically clear adhesive 232. UV curable adhesive 232 is dispensed onto the epoxy cube 802 and lens 202 is juxtaposed with UV curable adhesive 232. Lens structure 202 is spaced from the image sensor 201 by a distance such that images at "infinity" are focused on the desired image regions 702 and 703. The UV curable adhesive 232 is exposed to UV light and cured, locking lens structure 202 into position and permanently attaching lens structure 202 to enclosure 802. The total distance between

the back surface of the lens structure 202 and the top of the image sensor 201 die is 6.7 mm in the illustrated example. This distance is significantly longer than the effective focal length of 4.4 mm because the entire optical path between the back of the lens 202 and the front of the image array 201 is through a material with a higher index of refraction than air. Ideally the process of aligning the lens to the image sensor and curing the UV adhesive to hold it in place is accomplished while actively focusing the lens to accommodate variations in the manufacture of the lens and other image sensor assembly components. This process is accomplished by powering the image sensor during assembly and acquiring images of a far field scene from the image sensor into a host computer. The UV curable adhesive is dispensed onto the surface of the sensor and the lens is positioned on the UV curable adhesive using a multi-axis robot or positioner. The position of the lens is adjusted by the robot until the images acquired by the sensor appear in focus. At this point, the UV curable adhesive is exposed to UV light, cementing the lens into place. Micropositioning equipment suitable for this purpose is available from Physik Instremente GmbH and Company of Germany.

UV curable adhesive 232 serves to fill the space between the lens 202 and enclosure 802, and thus fills in any ripples or other non-planar surfaces of enclosure 802 thereby precluding the creation of air gaps between the lens 202 and the enclosure 802. To accomplish the desirable optical characteristics described hereinabove, UV curable adhesive 232 should have approximately the same index of refraction as enclosure 802. This structure has the distinct advantage of minimizing the number of optical surfaces wherein a significant mismatch of indices of refraction between two different mediums can occur, thus increasing the optical efficiency of the imaging system and reducing stray light. A suitable optically clear UV cured adhesive is Norland Optical Adhesive 68 manufactured by Norland Products, Inc., of New Brunswick, New Jersey. Other materials suitable for making the image sensor assembly 801 are available from Dymax.

The block 802 is completed by attaching the aperture stop 203 to lens 202. If the aperture stop is a member, it may be attached to the outer surface of the lens using an adhesive, one or more mechanical fasteners, or the like. If the aperture stop is paint, it may be applied directly to the surface of the lens element 202 after the lenses 208 and 209 are covered with a removable mask, such as tape. After the paint dries, the mask can be removed. The optical assembly 801 is then mounted to a support 220. In particular, the image sensor array 201 is physically mounted on a base substrate 221 by conventional means, and electrically connected to circuitry (not shown in Fig. 2b) by electrical

connectors such as wire bonds, solder, one or more connectors, or the like. The base substrate 221 may for example be a printed circuit board.

The support 220 may be constructed of the same material as the far field baffle 204, or it may be constructed of a different material. The base substrate 221 may be omitted if the far field baffle and the image sensor are mounted directly to either the support 220 or the housing (not shown) that carries the optical sensor assembly. For example, the support 220 may be a printed circuit board to which the image sensor 201 and the far field baffle are connected. Regardless of whether the base substrate is provided, the far field baffle is mounted to the support 220 or the housing (not shown) using an adhesive, a snap connector, a mechanical fastener, or the like.

An image sensor assembly 901 according to an alternate embodiment is illustrated in Fig. 9. In this embodiment, the image sensor 201 is packaged using more conventional electronic packaging, such as a ceramic package with a glass lid or a clear plastic package, which may for example be a quad flat pack or a dual-in-line (DIP) package. The packaged image sensor 901 is mounted, by suitable conventional means such as by soldering, to printed circuit board 902. An ultraviolet (UV) curable adhesive 905 is then dispensed onto the packaged image sensor 901. The adhesive used can be the same adhesive described above with respect to adhesive 232. The thickness of the UV curable adhesive is dependent on the packaged image sensor 901 type. If the required thickness is too great, layers of the UV curable adhesive can be built up or another material, such as an epoxy layer, can be sandwiched between the UV curable adhesives to decrease the thickness of the adhesive layer 905. The epoxy may be the same material described above with respect to the enclosure 230, 802. The lens structure 202 is juxtaposed with the UV curable adhesive 905 and focused in the manner previously described. Finally, the aperture stop 203 is attached to the lens structure 202 using an adhesive (not shown), mechanical fastener or the like.

In addition to the means described herein above, the lens structure 202 may be supported relative to the image sensor by other means, such as a mechanical support. Such a structure is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,130,421, entitled IMAGING SYSTEM FOR VEHICLE HEADLAMP CONTROL, filed on June 9, 1998. The same may also be used to position and maintain the relative relationship between the components of the optical assembly including the aperture stop and the far field baffle. A mechanical fastening arrangement is disclosed below with respect to Fig. 24.

MIRROR MOUNTED IMAGE SENSOR ASSEMBLY

As mentioned above, the headlamp dimmer can be advantageously integrated into a rearview mirror 1000 as illustrated in Fig. 10, wherein the light sensor assembly 201 is integrated into an automatic dimming electrochromic (EC) mirror subassembly 1001, or other variable reflectance mirror assembly. This location provides an unobstructed forward view through a region of the windshield of the vehicle that is typically cleaned by the vehicle's windshield wipers (not shown). Additionally, mounting the image sensor in the mirror assembly permits sharing of circuitry such as the power supply, microcontroller and light sensors. More specifically, the same ambient light sensor may be used to provide an ambient light measurement for both the auto-dimming mirror function and the headlamp control function.

Referring to Fig. 10, light sensor assembly 801 is mounted within a rearview mirror mount 1003, which is mounted to the vehicle windshield 1002. The rearview mirror mount 1003 provides an opaque enclosure for the image sensor. The infrared filter 206 can be mounted over a hole 1007 in the rearview mirror mount 1003, as is shown. Alternatively, the far field baffle 214 can be used with the infrared filter 206 mounted therein. If the far field baffle 214 is used, it is mounted to the circuit board 1008 with the image sensor assembly 202. Regardless of whether the far field baffle is used, the circuit board 1008 is mounted to rearview mirror mount 1003 using mounting brackets 1020 and 1021. The mounting brackets may be implemented using any suitable construction, such as metal brackets, plastic brackets which can be formed either integrally with the housing 1003 or as separate components, mechanical fasteners which engage the circuit board 1008, or the like. The separate brackets can be attached using an adhesive, metal fasteners or other mechanical fastening means. Image sensor assembly 201 is thus attached to, and held stationary by, the rearview mirror mount 1003 which is securely attached to the vehicle windshield or roof by conventional means.

A connector 1005 is connected to circuit board 1008 using a suitable commercially available circuit board connector (not shown), which in turn is connected to the image sensor 201 through circuit board 1008. The connector 1005 is connected to a main circuit 1015 through a cable 1006. The main circuit board is mounted within rearview mirror housing 1004 by conventional means. Power and a communication link with the vehicle electrical system, including the headlamps 111 (Fig. 1), are provided via a vehicle wiring harness 1017 (Fig. 10).

THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

The image sensor 201 electrically connected to the main circuit board 1015 and mounted in the vehicle rearview mirror housing 1004 (Fig. 10) is represented in Fig. 11. The microcontroller 1105 receives image signals from the image sensor 201, processes the images, and generates output signals. Although described with reference to a circuit board mounted in a rearview mirror housing, the circuit board 1105 can be mounted in a vehicle accessory, such as a sun visor, overhead console, center console, dashboard, prismatic rearview mirror, A-pillar, or at any other suitable location in the vehicle. Should the controlled vehicle (100 in Fig. 1) include an electrochromic mirror, the circuitry for the electrochromic mirror preferably shares the circuit board 1015 (Fig. 10) with microprocessor 1105. Thus, the main circuit board 1015 is mounted within the mirror housing 1004. The EC circuitry further includes ambient light sensor 1107 and glare light sensor 1109, which may advantageously be digital photodiode light sensors as described in United States Patent Application No. 09/307,191 entitled PHOTODIODE LIGHT SENSOR, filed January 25, 2000, and U.S. Patent Application No. 09/491,192 entitled VEHICLE EQUIPMENT CONTROL WITH SEMICONDUCTOR LIGHT SENSORS, filed May 7, 1999. Microcontroller 1105 uses inputs from ambient light sensor 1107 and glare lights sensor 1109 to determine the appropriate state for the electrochromic mirror element 1102. The mirror is driven by EC mirror drive circuitry 1111, which may be a drive circuit described in U.S. Patent No. 5,956,012, entitled SERIES DRIVE CIRCUIT, filed by Robert R. Turnbull et al. on September 16, 1997, and PCT Application No. PCT/US97/16946, entitled INDIVIDUAL MIRROR CONTROL SYSTEM, filed by Robert C. Knapp et al. on September 16, 1997; and U.S. Patent Application No. 09/236,969, entitled AUTOMATIC DIMMING MIRROR USING SEMICONDUCTOR LIGHT SENSOR WITH INTEGRAL CHARGE COLLECTION, filed May 7, 1999, by Jon H. Bechtel et al.. Other driver circuits are known that can be used to drive the EC element 1102. The EC mirror drive circuit 1111 provides current to the EC element 1102 through signal output 1127.

The mirror may communicate with a light control module over a serial link therebetween in a manner similar to that disclosed in commonly-assigned U.S. Patent Application No. 09/368,325, entitled "VEHICLE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM," filed on August 3, 1999, by Robert C. Knapp et al.

The microcontroller 1105 can take advantage of the availability of signals (such as vehicle speed) communicated over the vehicle's electrical bus in making decisions

regarding the operation of the headlamps 111, which are represented by high beams 1131 and low beams 1132 in Fig. 11, and the electrochromic mirror 1102. In particular, speed input 1117 provides vehicle speed information to the microcontroller 1105, from which vehicle speed criteria can be used for determining the control state for the headlamps 111. The reverse signal 1119 informs microcontroller 1105 that the vehicle is in reverse, responsive to which the microcontroller 1105 clears the electrochromic mirror element 1102 regardless of the signals output from the light sensors 1107, 1109. Auto ON/OFF switch input 1121 is connected to a switch having two states to dictate to microcontroller 1105 whether the vehicle headlamps 1131, 1132 should be automatically or manually controlled. The auto ON/OFF switch (not shown) connected to the ON/OFF switch input 1121 may be incorporated with the headlamp switches that are traditionally mounted on the vehicle dashboard or incorporated into steering wheel column levers. Manual dimmer switch input 1123 is connected to a manually actuated switch (not shown) provides a manual override signal for the high beam state. Should the current controlled state of the high beams be ON, the microcontroller will respond to actuation signal manual override signal control input 1123 to turn the high beams OFF temporarily until the driver restores operation or, optionally, until a predetermined time has elapsed. Alternatively, should the high beams be OFF, the microcontroller 1105 will respond to an actuation signal on input 1123 to turn the high beams ON. The manual high beam control switch can be implemented using a lever switch located on the steering column of controlled vehicle 100 (Fig. 1).

The circuit board 1101 has several outputs. The control signal on electrochromic output 1127 provides current to the electrochromic element 1102. Additional outputs (not shown) may optionally be provided to control exterior electrochromic rearview mirrors (not shown) if such additional mirrors are provided. The microcontroller 1105 communicates the current state of the low beam headlamps 1131 and the high beam headlamps 1132 to the headlamp drive 1104 via headlamp control output 1127. The microcontroller 1105 generates control signals communicated over conductor 1113 (Fig. 11) to an optional visual indicator 1115 which displays the current state of the high beam headlamps to the driver of controlled vehicle 100. The high beam indicator is traditionally located in or near the vehicle's instrument cluster on the vehicle dashboard. As described further below, a separate indicator may be provided to indicate whether the automatic headlamp control is active. A compass sensor 1135 may be connected to the circuit board 1015 via a bi-directional data bus 1137. The compass can be implemented using a

commercially available compass of the type generating digital or analog signals indicative of the vehicle's heading, such as those described in U.S. Patent No. 5,239,264 entitled ZERO-OFFSET MAGNETOMETER HAVING COIL AND CORE SENSOR CONTROLLING PERIOD OF AN OSCILLATOR CIRCUIT; U.S. Patent No. 4,851,775 entitled DIGITAL COMPASS AND MAGNETOMETER HAVING A SENSOR COIL WOUND ON A HIGH PERMEABILITY ISOTROPIC CORE; U.S. Patent No. 5,878,370 entitled VEHICLE COMPASS SYSTEM WITH VARIABLE RESOLUTION; U.S. Patent No. 5,761,094, entitled VEHICLE COMPASS SYSTEM; U.S. Patent No. 5,664,335, entitled VEHICLE COMPASS CIRCUIT; U.S. Patent No. 4,953,305 entitled VEHICLE COMPASS WITH AUTOMATIC CONTINUOUS CALIBRATION; U.S. Patent No. 4,677,381 entitled FLUX-GATE SENSOR ELECTRICAL DRIVE METHOD AND CIRCUIT; U.S. Patent No. 4,546,551 entitled ELECTRICAL CONTROL SYSTEM; U.S. Patent No. 4,425,717 entitled VEHICLE MAGNETIC SENSOR; and U.S. Patent No. 4,424,631 entitled ELECTRICAL COMPASS. A fog lamp control 1141 can be connected to receive via fog light control output 1142 control signals generated by microcontroller 1105. Fog lamp control 1141 controls front fog lamps 1143 and rear fog light 1145 to turn ON and OFF.

Some or all of the inputs 1117, 1119, 1121, 1123, and 1135, and outputs 1127, 1113, 1127, and 1142, as well as any other possible inputs or outputs, such as a steering wheel input, can optionally be provided through a vehicle communications bus 1125 shown in Fig. 11. Vehicle bus 1125 may be implemented using any suitable standard communication bus, such as a Controller Area Network (CAN) bus. If vehicle bus 1125 is used, microcontroller 1105 may include a bus controller or the control interface may be provided by additional components on the main control board 1015.

Fig. 12 illustrates a headlamp drive 1104 including a drive circuit 1203 for low beam headlamps 1131 and a drive circuit 1201 for high beam headlamps 1132. Bus 1127 includes respective wires 1206 and 1207 carrying pulse width modulated (PWM) signals generated by microcontroller 1105 for driving low beam headlamps 1131 and high beam headlamps 1132. Alternatively, headlamp drive 1104 may contain a DC power supply to vary the voltage supplied to the lamps 1131, 1132, and thus their brightness, in response to control signals on output 1127. Yet another alternative envisioned is to vary the aim of the high beam headlamps 1131 as is described hereinbelow and as taught in U.S. Patent No. 6,049,171, entitled CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE HEADLAMP CONTROL, filed by Joseph Stam et al. on September 18, 1998.

Headlamp drive 1104 provides power to the high beam 1131 and low beam 1132 headlamps. In the simplest case, the headlamp drive contains relays engaged in response to signal 1127 to turn ON or OFF the headlamps. In a more preferred embodiment, high beam headlamps 1131 and 1132 fade ON or OFF under the control of headlamp drive 1104 which generates a variable control signal. Such a control system is described in copending U.S. Patent No. 6,049,171. In general, the patent teaches variable emission control of the headlamps can be provided by energizing the headlamps using a pulse width modulation (PWM) supply, wherein the duty cycle of the drive varied between 0% and 100% to effect a continuously variable brightness from the headlamps 1131, 1132.

The microcontroller 1105 analyzes images acquired by the image sensor assembly 201 responsive to which it detects oncoming or preceding vehicles in the forward field of view. The microcontroller 1105 uses this information in conjunction with the various other inputs thereto to determine the current control state for the headlamps 1131, 1132. The current control state of the headlamps refers to the brightness of the high beams and the low beams. In a variable control system, this brightness is varied by changing the duty cycle of the beams or the DC voltage applied to the lamps as described above. In a non-variable system, the control state refers to whether the high beams and low beams are ON or OFF. A more detailed schematic showing the connections to the microcontroller 1105 is shown in Fig. 13. The microcontroller 1105 can be implemented using a microcontroller, a microprocessor, a digital signal processor, a programmable logic unit, a discrete circuitry, or combination thereof. Additionally, the microcontroller may be implemented using more than one microprocessor.

OPERATION

The combined effect of the lens structure 202 and the far field baffle 204 will first be described with respect to Figs. 2a and 7. As mentioned above, in one embodiment, the image array 301 contains 64 columns and 80 rows of 30 μm pixels. The forward scene imaged through the red lens 209 is located on one region 703 of the image array 301. The forward scene imaged through the other lens element 208 is located on region 702 of the image array 301. In the embodiment illustrated, each of these regions is a 60 wide by 20 high pixel subwindow of the image array. The centers of the two regions 702 and 703 are separated 1.2 mm in the Y direction, the same spacing as the center axis of lens 208 and 209. Fourteen pixel rows 704 define a band that lies between the two regions 702, 703 and serves as a border, or buffer, separating these two regions.

The image sensor assembly 250 provides several advantages. Because the block will be solid, it eliminates any surfaces between the image sensor 201 die and the lens structure 202. By eliminating these surfaces, stray light is reduced. Second, the preferred embodiment allows for the active alignment of the lens, which allows for compensation of various manufacturing variances, as is described in greater detail herein above. Finally, the assembly is inexpensive, eliminating the need for costly ceramic packaging. Some or all of the above-mentioned advantages can be realized through variations on this structure. For example, the enclosure 230, UV curable adhesive 232 and possibly the stress relieving gel 805 (Fig. 8) can be replaced with a UV cured epoxy adhesive.

In operation, an image is exposed onto the image array 301 (Fig. 3) for an exposure period, which may also be referred to herein as an integration period. At the end of the exposure period, an output signal is stored for each of the pixels, and preferably is stored in the pixels as is the case with the photogate pixel architecture described in U.S. Patent No. 5,471,515. The output signal from each of the pixels is representative of the illumination sensed by each pixel. This output signal is transferred to the column output circuitry 302 one row at a time. The column output circuitry includes capacitors storing the respective pixel output signals for each pixel in the row. Next, the pixel output signals are successively amplified by an analog amplifier 303. The amplifier gain is advantageously adjustable, and may for example be controlled to selectively increase the amplitude of the amplifier input signal by 1 (unity gain) to 15 times, in integer increments. Adjustment of the gain of the amplifier permits adjustment of the system sensitivity. The amplified analog signals output from amplifier 303 are sampled by a flash analog-to-digital converter (ADC) 404. The flash ADC 404 converts each of the amplified analog signals, which correspond to respective pixels, into eight-bit digital gray scale values. Various bias voltages for the sensor are generated by digital-to-analog converter (DAC) 105. Two of the voltages generated by the bias generators are the ADC high and low reference values, which determine the analog voltages that will correspond to digital values of 255 and 0, respectively, thus setting the range of the ADC.

Serial timing and control circuitry 309 dictates the timing sequence of the sensor operation, and is described in detail in co-pending U.S. Patent No. 5,990,469, entitled CONTROL CIRCUIT FOR IMAGE ARRAY SENSORS, issued to Jon H. Bechtel et al on November 23, 1999.

The image sensor control process will now be described beginning with reference to Fig. 14. The control process may include control of an electrochromic (EC) mirror.

However, because processes for controlling an EC mirror are well known, such processes are not completely described herein. Electrochromic devices are generally known, and examples of electrochromic devices and associated circuitry, some of which are commercially available, are disclosed in Byker U.S. Patent No. 4,902,108; Bechtel et al. Canadian Patent No. 1,300,945; Bechtel U.S. Patent No. 5,204,778; Byker U.S. Patent No. 5,280,380; Byker U.S. Patent No. 5,336,448; Bauer et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,434,407; Tonar U.S. Patent No. 5,448,397; Knapp U.S. Patent No. 5,504,478; Tonar et al. U.S. Patent No. 5 679,283, Tonar et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,682,267; Tonar et al. 5,689,370; Tonar et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,888,431; Bechtel et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,451,822; U.S. Patent No. 5,956,012; PCT application Serial No. PCT/US97/16946; and U.S. Patent Application No. 09/236,969.

The forward ambient light sensor 1107 and rear glare sensor 1109 measure the forward and rear light levels, as indicated in step 1401 (Fig. 14). The forward ambient measurement is used to control both the low beam and high beam headlamps 1131, 1132 and the electrochromic mirror 1102. Additionally, the forward ambient measurement may be used to control the brightness of the daytime running lights and the brightness of the tail lights. The rear glare measurement is used for the control of the electrochromic mirror 1102 reflectivity. The forward ambient light level measurement is averaged with prior measurements to compute a forward time averaged ambient light level. This average light level is computed as the average of measurements taken over a 25-30 second interval. Responsive thereto, the microcontroller 1105 computes the control state for electrochromic element 1105 as a function of the light level measured by sensors 1107 and 1109 in step 1202. Where the microcontroller 1115 is a microcontroller selected from the Motorola MCS912, the electrochromic element drive state can be set by programming a pulse width modulated (PWM) duty cycle corresponding to the desired reflectance level of the electrochromic element into a pulse width modulated peripheral to the Motorola MCS912 family microcontroller. This PWM output is then fed to a series drive circuit in a manner similar to that disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,956,012, entitled SERIES DRIVE CIRCUIT, filed by Robert R. Turnbull et al. on September 16, 1997. If the headlamps 1131, 1132 are not in auto mode as determined in step 1403, which is manually set responsive to the signal 1121, the microcontroller 1105 returns to step 1401, such that the microcontroller will continue to control the variable reflectance of the electrochromic element 1102. Decision 1403 provides the user with a manual override if the high beams

are ON. Additionally, the high beam automatic control will be skipped in step 1403 (the decision will be NO) if the high beams are not ON.

If it is determined in step 1403 that the automatic mode is active, the microcontroller 1105 uses the average ambient light level measured in step 1401 to determine whether the ambient light level is below a low beam minimum threshold in step 1404. The threshold may for example be 1-3 lux, and in one implementation was 2 lux. If the ambient light level is above the threshold, indicating that high beam headlamps would not provide significant advantage, high beam control will not be used, and the microcontroller 1105 returns to step 1401. If the ambient light level is below the low beam minimum, for example below approximately 2 lux, the use of high beam headlamps may be desired. In this case, the microcontroller 1105 will operate to control the headlamps 1131, 1132. In addition to the average ambient light level discussed above, it is also advantageous to consider the instantaneous ambient light level. Should the instantaneous ambient light level suddenly drop to a very low value, for example less than 0.5 lux, automatic high beam operation may begin immediately rather than waiting for the average ambient light level to reach the threshold for operation of the high beams. This situation may occur when a vehicle sitting under a well lit intersection suddenly crosses the intersection into a dark street where high beam operation is desired immediately. The microcontroller 1105 analyzes images of the forward scene acquired by image sensor 201 to detect the presence of oncoming or preceding vehicles as indicated in step 1405. Based upon the results of step 1405, the microcontroller sets the control state of the headlamps in step 1406. Setting the control state requires setting a duty cycle for the pulse drive in the preferred embodiment. The Motorola MCS912 family microcontroller includes timer/counter peripherals which can be used to generate pulse width modulated signals 1206 and 1207. In some vehicles, the low beam headlamps will always be ON regardless of the state of the high beams. In such a vehicle, only the duty cycle of the high beams will be varied. Other vehicles will have the low beams OFF when the high beams are ON, in which case the duty cycle of the low beams will be reduced as the high beam duty cycle is increased. Control of the vehicle headlamps using a PWM signal is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,049,171, entitled CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE HEADLAMP CONTROL, filed by Joseph Stam et al. on September 18, 1998.

Step 1405, which is the process of acquiring images in the forward field of the vehicle and analyzing such images, is described in greater detail with reference to Fig. 15. A first pair of images are acquired in step 1501 through both the red lens 209 and the cyan

lens 208, corresponding to the two fields 702 and 703 shown in Fig. 7. The field of view of the resulting images is approximately 25° horizontally and 15° vertically using the 64 by 26 pixels, the lens optics, and the far field baffle described above. These images are taken at a low sensitivity. Sensitivity of the image sensor 201 may for example be dictated by the frame exposure time, the analog amplifier gain, and the DAC high and low references. The image sensor should be just sensitive enough to image oncoming headlamps at the maximum distance for which the controlled vehicle's headlamps should be dimmed. These images will be sufficient to detect oncoming headlamps at any distance of interest and nearby tail lights without being washed out by bright headlamps or other noise light sources. In this mode, the sensor should not be sensitive enough to detect reflections off signs or reflectors except in rare cases where the reflecting object is very near to the controlled vehicle. During dark ambient light conditions, this sensitivity will be low enough to detect only lighted objects.

The sensitivity of the image sensor when acquiring the images in step 1501 may also be varied according to whether the high beams are currently ON. When controlling high beams manually, a driver will typically wait until an oncoming vehicle 105 (Fig. 1) or a preceding vehicle 110 is almost close enough for the controlled vehicle's high beams to be annoying before dimming the headlamps 111. However, if the high beams are OFF, most drivers will not activate their high beam headlamps even if an oncoming vehicle 105 is at a great distance. This is in anticipation that the oncoming vehicle 105 will soon come within a distance where the controlled vehicle's high beam headlamps will annoy the oncoming driver, such that the driver of the controlled vehicle 100 will have to turn the high beams OFF shortly after they were activated. To partially mimic this behavior, a higher sensitivity image is acquired if the high beams are OFF, enabling detection of vehicles at a greater distance, than if the high beams are ON. For example, the image sensor when the high beams are OFF can have 50% greater sensitivity than when the high beams are ON.

The images are analyzed in step 1502 (Fig. 15) to locate any light sources captured in the images. In step 1503, the properties of the light sources detected are analyzed to determine if they are from oncoming vehicles, preceding vehicles, or other objects. If a light source from a preceding vehicle 110 is bright enough to indicate that the high beams should be dim, the control process proceeds to step 1510 and the high beam state is set.

If no vehicles are detected in step 1503, a second pair of images is taken through lens 208, 209 at a greater sensitivity. First, a determination of the state of the high beams is made in step 1505. This determination is made because the sensitivity of the second pair of images may be five to ten times the sensitivity of the first pair. With a higher sensitivity image, more nuisance light sources are likely to be imaged by the image sensor 201. These nuisances are typically caused by reflections off road signs or road reflectors, which become much more pronounced with the high beams ON. When the high beams are ON, it is advantageous to limit the forward field of view to the area directly in front of the controlled vehicle such that it is unlikely that reflectors or reflective signs will be in the field of view. An ideal narrowed field of view is about 13° horizontally, which is achieved by a reduction of the width of regions 702 and 703 (Fig. 7) to about 35 pixels. If the high beams are OFF, an image with the same field of view as the low sensitivity images acquired in step 1501 can be used since the reflections of low beam headlamps off of signs and reflectors are much less bright than those when high beams are used. Thus, the decision step 1505 is used to select either a narrow field of view image in step1506 or a wide field of view in step 1507. For either field of view, a pair of images will be taken. As described above with respect to the acquisition of low sensitivity images in step 1501, the sensitivity of the high sensitivity images may also be varied according to the state of the high beam headlamps to provide additional control in avoiding nuisance light sources.

As with the low sensitivity images, the high sensitivity images are analyzed to detect light sources in step 1508. A determination is made if any of these light sources represent a vehicle close enough to the controlled vehicle to require dimming of the high beam headlamps.

Additional images, with greater sensitivity and/or different fields of view, may be acquired in addition to those mentioned above. Additional images may be necessary depending on the dynamic range of the image sensor. For example, it may be necessary to acquire a very high sensitivity image with a very narrow field of view to detect a preceding car's tail lights at a great distance. Alternatively, should the image sensor have sufficient dynamic range, only one pair of images at one sensitivity may be needed. It is advantageous to use three sets of images, a low sensitivity set, a medium sensitivity set, and a high sensitivity set. The medium sensitivity set has about 5 times the sensitivity of the low gain and the high gain has about 20 times the sensitivity of the low gain. The low

gain image set is primarily utilized for detection of headlamps while the medium and high gain images are primarily utilized for detection of tail lights.

Depending on the quantum efficiency of the image sensor at different wavelengths of light, and the filter characteristics of the filters used for the lens elements 208 and 209, it may be advantageous to use a different sensitivity for the two regions 702 and 703. The timing and control circuitry 309 described in the U.S. Patent No. 5,990,469 can be enhanced to provide the capability to acquire two different windows of pixels simultaneously and use different analog gains for each window. This is accomplished by adding a register which contains the gain values for the analog amplifier used during acquisition of each subwindow. In this way, the relative sensitivity of the two regions can be automatically balanced to provide a similar output when a white light source is imaged through both lens elements. This may be of particular advantage if the image for region 703 is acquired without filtering the light rays, for example by using a clear lens instead of a cyan filter for rays passing through lens element 208. For this lens set, the pixels in region 702 will receive approximately 3 times as much light when imaging a white light source as those pixels in region 703 which receive light that has passed through a red filter. The analog gain can be set 3 times as high for pixels in red filtered region 703 to balance the output between the two regions.

The analysis of images to detect light sources indicated in steps 1502 and 1508 is described with reference to Fig. 16. Analysis begins with the image in region 703 acquired through the red lens. It is advantageous to begin with the red filtered image because several nuisance light sources do not admit a significant amount of red light. These nuisance light sources include mercury vapor streetlights, green traffic lights, and reflections off green and blue highway signs. Therefore, a number of potential nuisance light sources are eliminated from consideration. Pixel locations are referred to by X and Y coordinates with the 0,0 pixel location corresponding to a top left pixel. Beginning with the 0,0 pixel 1401 and raster scanning through the image, each pixel is compared to a minimum threshold in step 1602. The minimum pixel threshold dictates the faintest objects in the image that may be of interest. If the current pixel is below the pixel threshold and it is not the last pixel in the red image window, as determined in step 1603, analysis proceeds to the next pixel as indicated in step1604. The next pixel location is determined by raster scanning through the image by first incrementing the X coordinate and examining pixels to the right until the last pixel in the row is reached, and then proceeding to the first pixel in the next row.

If it is determined that the current pixel value is greater than the minimum threshold, a seed fill analysis algorithm is entered in which step the size, brightness and other parameters of the identified light source are determined as indicated in step 1605. The seed fill algorithm is used to identify the pixels of the image sensor associated with a common light source, and thus identify associated pixels meeting a pixel criteria. This can be accomplished by identifying contiguous pixels exceeding their respective threshold levels. Upon completion of the seed fill algorithm, the properties of the light source are added to the light source list in step 1606 for later analysis (steps 1503 and 1509 in Fig. 15) to determine if certain conditions are met, which conditions are used to identify whether the light source represents an oncoming or preceding vehicle. A counter of the number of sources in the list is then incremented as indicated in step 1607. The microcontroller then goes to step 1603.

If it is determined in step 1603 that the last pixel in the red image has been examined, the microcontroller 1105 determines whether any light sources were detected, as indicated in step 1608. If no light source is detected, the analysis of the image terminates as indicated at step 1609. If one or more light sources are detected through the red lens 209, the cyan or clear image window 702 is analyzed to determine the brightness of those light sources as imaged through the other lens 208, in order to determine the relative color of the light sources. In this situation, the "brightness" of the sources refers to the sum of the gray scale values of all the pixels imaging the source; a value computed by the seed fill algorithm. The first source on the list is analyzed in step 1610. A seed fill algorithm is executed in step 1611, with the cyan image starting with the pixel having the same coordinates (relative to the upper left of the window) as the center of the light source detected in the red image. In this manner, only those pixels identified with a light source viewed through the lens associated with the red filter will be analyzed as viewed through the other filter, which is advantageous, as many nuisance light sources which would otherwise be analyzed when viewed through a clear or cyan filter will be removed by the red filter. By only considering light sources identified through the red filter, the amount of memory required to store information associated with light sources viewed through the other filter will be reduced. The ratio of the brightness of the source in the red image 703 to the brightness of the source in the other image 702 is stored in the light list, as indicated in step 1612, along with the other parameters computed in step 1605 for the current light source. This procedure continues for other sources in the light list 1613 until the red to

cyan ratios are computed for all sources in the list 1615, at which point the analysis terminates at step 1614.

As a further measure to reduce the required memory, the pixel data may be processed as it is received without storing the entire image in memory. Such a processing algorithm is disclosed in commonly assigned U.S. Patent Application No. _____ _____ [Attorney Docket No. GEN10 P380], entitled IMAGE PROCESSING SYSTEM TO CONTROL VEHICLE HEADLAMPS OR OTHER VEHICLE EQUIPMENT, filed on March 5, 2001, by Joseph S. Stam.

It will be recognized that where it is desirable to count the number of light sources to determine the type of driving environment, and in particular to identify city streets or country roads, it may be desirable to count all of the light sources viewed through the cyan or clear filter. In this way, nuisance light sources can be counted. Alternatively, the number of light sources viewed through the red filter can be counted for purposes of inhibiting turning ON the high beams if a threshold number of sources are identified.

The seed fill algorithm used in steps 1605 and 1611 is shown in Fig. 17a. The outer section of the seed fill algorithm is entered with the current pixel value at step 1605. The outer section of the seed fill algorithm is executed only once at each step 1605, while the inner recursive seed fill algorithm is entered many times until all contiguous pixels meeting a pixel criteria are identified. After the entry step 1701 of the outer section of the seed fill algorithm, several variables are initiated as indicated in step 1702. The variables XAVG and YAVG are set to zero. These variables will be used to compute the average X and Y coordinates of the pixels imaging a light source, which average coordinates will together correspond to the center of the light source. The TOTALGV variable is used to sum the gray scale values of all the pixels imaging the source. This value will define the brightness of the source. The SIZE variable is used to tally the total number of pixels imaging the source. The MAX variable stores the maximum gray scale value of any pixel imaging the source. A CALLS variable is used to limit the number of recursive calls to the recursive inner seed fill function to prevent memory overflow as well as for tracking.

The inner seed fill algorithm is first entered in step 1703. The start of the inner recursive seed fill function for the first and subsequent calls to the seed fill function is indicated by block 1704. The first step in the inner seed fill function is to increment the CALLS variable as indicated in step 1705. Next, microcontroller 1105 determines if the CALLS variable is greater than the maximum allowable number of recursive calls as determined in step 1706. The number of recursive calls is limited by the amount of

memory available for storing light source information. If it is determined that the number of recursive calls exceeds the threshold, the recursive function proceeds to step 1719, wherein the counter is decremented and then returns to the step from which the recursive function was called. Should this occur, a flag is set indicating that the current light source had too many recursive calls and parameters computed by the seed fill algorithm will be incorrect. This prevents too many levels of recursion from occurring, which would overflow the memory of the microcontroller. It is also possible to implement the algorithm non-recursively.

If the decision in step 1706 is that the CALL variable is not greater than the maximum allowable, the microcontroller 1105 next compares the current pixel with a minimum gray scale threshold in step 1707 to determine if the pixel is significantly bright to be included in the light source. The threshold considered in step 1707 can be constant or vary by position. If it varies, the variable thresholds may be stored in a spatial look-up table having respective pixel thresholds stored for each pixel, or each region of the image sensor. Where the threshold is variable by position, it is envisioned that where a pixel at one location exceeds its associated pixel threshold, the controller can continue to use that threshold for adjacent pixels while searching for a contiguous group of pixels associated with a single light source, or the controller can continue to use the respective pixel thresholds stored in the spatial look-up table.

If the condition in step 1707 is not met, this inner recursive seed fill function terminates by advancing to step 1719. If the pixel has a high enough gray scale value as determined in step 1707, its gray scale value is added to the global TOTALGV variable 1708, its X and Y coordinates are added to the XAVG and YAVG variables 1709 and 1710, and the size variable is incremented in step 1711. If the gray scale value of the pixel is greater than any other pixel encountered in the current seed fill, as determined in step 1712, the MAX value is set to this gray scale value 1713.

Following a no decision in step 1712, the gray scale value of the pixel is set to 0 to prevent further recursive calls from including this pixel. If a future recursive call occurs at this pixel, and the pixel is not zeroed, the pixel will be added the second time through. By zeroing the pixel, it will not be added again, as the pixel's gray scale value is no longer greater than the minimum threshold. Additionally, this pixel will be ignored in step 1602 should it be encountered again while scanning the image during analysis.

The inner recursive seed fill algorithm next proceeds to recursively call to itself until it has looked to the right, left, above and below each pixel until all of the contiguous

pixels exceeding the minimum pixel threshold value in decision step 1707 are considered. Step 1715 represents returning to step 1704 for the pixel to the right. The microcontroller will continue to look at pixels to the right until it reaches a pixel that does not meet the criteria of decision step 1706 or 1707. Step 1716 represents returning to step 1704 for the pixel to the left. Step 1717 represents returning to step 1704 to look at the pixel above. Step 1718 represents returning to step 1704 to look at the pixel below. The microcontroller will then look at the pixel to the left of the last pixel that did meet decision step 1707. The processor will look at pixels adjacent each pixel exceeding the threshold of step 1707 should the neighboring pixels exist (*i.e.*, the immediate pixel is not an edge pixel). Step 1719 decrements the CALLS variable each time the step is executed, and the microcontroller will return to the calling program until the CALLS value reaches 0. Returning to the function that called it may be another instance of the inner recursive function, or should this be the initial pixel examined, to the outer recursive algorithm 1721.

An example of how the inner and outer seed fill algorithms operate will now be described with reference to Fig. 17b. The example is made with respect to an exemplary very small image sensor having 30 pixels. Pixels 4, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, and 28 exceed the threshold in step 1707 in this example. Additionally, the number of calls required does not exceed the threshold in step 1706. The image array 301 is impacted by a light source 1751, indicated by contour 1751. The microcontroller will operate as follows in evaluating the pixels. For pixel 1, the microcontroller 1105 will enter the seed fill algorithm at step 1701, initialize the variables in step 1702, and set the current pixel in step 1703. The microcontroller will next enter the inner seed fill function in step 1704. The CALLS variable will be incremented to 1 in step 1705, which is below the Maximum Calls threshold. Because there is no light on the pixel, the minimum threshold is not exceeded and the microcontroller will go to step 1719, decrement the CALLS variable in step 1720, and because this is the first time through the inner seed fill program, the microcontroller will continue to steps 1721 –1723. The process will be repeated for pixels 2 and 3, which are both below the minimum pixel threshold used in step 1707.

When the microcontroller gets to pixel 4, it will enter the outer seed fill at step 1701, set the variables to zero in step 1702, set the current pixel to pixel 4 in step 1703, and enter the inner seed fill algorithm. The CALLS variable will be incremented to 1, as it is the first pixel in this outer seed fill. The CALLS variable will be less than the

Maximum Calls threshold and the pixel's gray scale value will exceed the minimum threshold. Accordingly, the gray value will be added to TOTALGV, the pixel coordinates will be added to those that will be considered for XAVG and YAVG, and the SIZE will be incremented such that the size will be 1. The gray value for pixel 4 will be the MAX, as it is the only gray value in this outer seed fill. The gray value will be set to zero for pixel 4 in step 1714.

The microcontroller will then identify all of the contiguous pixels that exceed the threshold set in step 1707. In particular, through the inner seed fill routine disclosed in Fig. 17a, the microcontroller will add the pixels as follows. Pixel 4, added first as it is the first with a gray scale value greater than the threshold ("the threshold" in this paragraph referring to the minimum threshold in step 1707). The program then calls the recursive function for pixel 5 to the right, which is not added as it is below the threshold (as used in this paragraph, "added" means the pixel's coordinates are added to XAVG and YAVG, the pixel's gray scale value is added to TOTALGV, SIZE is incremented, and the pixel's gray scale value becomes the maximum pixel gray scale value if it exceeds MAX). Pixel 3 to the left is called next, and it is not added for the same reason. There is no pixel above pixel 4. Accordingly, the recursive function is next called for pixel 10 in step 1718. Pixel 10 will be added as its value is greater than the threshold. The microcontroller 1105 will then look to the right of pixel 10, namely at pixel 11, which is greater than the threshold, so it will be added. The microcontroller will then look to the right of pixel 11, which is pixel 12. Pixel 12 will not be added as its gray scale value is below the threshold. Looking to the left of pixel 11, pixel 10 will not be added as it was zeroed when it was added previously. Looking above pixel 11, pixel 5 will not be added. Looking below pixel 11, pixel 17 will be added. Next, the recursive routine will be called for the pixel to the right of pixel 17. Pixel 18 will be added. Moving on to the recursive routine for pixel 18, there is no pixel to the right of pixel 18. Looking to the left of pixel 18, pixel 17 will not be added as it was zeroed when it was added. Looking above pixel 18, pixel 12 will not be added. Looking below pixel 18, pixel 24 will not be added as it is below the threshold. Moving back to the previous recursive function that was not exhausted, the microcontroller 1105 will move back and look to the left of pixel 17, which is pixel 16. Pixel 16 is added. Calling the recursive function again, the microcontroller will look to the right of pixel 16. Pixel 17 will not be added as it was cleared after it was previously added. Looking to the left of pixel 16, pixel 15 is added. Calling the recursive function from pixel 15, the microcontroller will look to the right at pixel 16. Pixel 16 is not added,

as it was zeroed after it was previously added. Looking to the left, pixel 14 is added. Calling the recursive function from pixel 14, the microcontroller will look to the right at pixel 15, which will not be added. Looking to the left of pixel 14, pixel 13 is not added. Looking above pixel 14, pixel 8 is not added. Looking below pixel 14, pixel 20 is not added. Moving back to the function that called the recursive function for pixel 14, the microcontroller will look above pixel 15 at pixel 9. Pixel 9 is added. Calling the recursive function for pixel 9, looking to the right, pixel 10 is not added. Moving to the left, pixel 8 is not added as it is below the threshold. Looking above, pixel 3 is not added. Looking down, pixel 15 is not added as it was previously cleared. Moving back to the function that called the recursive function for pixel 9 has the microcontroller looking at the pixel below pixel 15. Pixel 21 is then added. Starting the recursive function for pixel 21, looking to the right, pixel 22 is added. Starting the recursive function for pixel 22, pixel 23 is added as it exceeds the threshold. Starting the recursive function for pixel 23, pixel 24 is not added as it is below threshold. Moving to the left, pixel 22 is not added as it was zeroed. Looking above, pixel 17 is not added as it was zeroed after it was added. Looking down, pixel 29 is not added as it is below the threshold. Moving back to the function that called the recursive function for pixel 23 has the microcontroller 1105 looking to the left of pixel 22. Pixel 21 is not added as it was cleared. Looking above pixel 22, pixel 16 is not added. Looking below pixel 22, pixel 28 is added. Performing the recursive function for pixel 28, pixel 29 to the right is not added, pixel 27 to the left is not added, pixel 22 above is not added, and there is no pixel below pixel 28. Moving back one function, the recursive function for pixel 22 was completed, so the microcontroller returns to pixel 21. Looking to the left of pixel 21, pixel 20 is not added. Pixel 15 above pixel 21 is not added and pixel 27 below pixel 21 is not added. The recursive function for pixel 15 was exhausted, so the microcontroller looks above pixel 16 to pixel 10 which is not added. Looking below pixel 16, pixel 22 is not added. Moving back one function has the microcontroller looking above pixel 17 at pixel 11, which is not added. Looking below pixel 17, pixel 23 is not added, if the recursive function for pixel 11 was completed, the microcontroller returns to the last non-exhausted pixel of the contiguous lighted pixels. The microcontroller looks to the left of pixel 10, and pixel 9 is not added. The microcontroller looks above pixel 10, and pixel 4 is not added. Looking below, pixel 16 is not added. The inner seed fill is complete.

After the last pixel is added, YAVG, XAVG and size are used to select the center of the light in steps 1722 and 1723.

The seed fill scheme just described is the preferred seed fill algorithm for analysis of the red image 703. It requires some modification for the other image 702. This need can be seen from the following example. Where a pair of oncoming headlamps is identified as two separate lights in the red image, it is possible that these sources may contain more light in the cyan half of the spectrum than the red half (as is the case with High Intensity Discharge headlamps). In this case, what was detected as two separate light sources in the red image can bloom into one source in the cyan image. Thus, there would only be one source in the cyan image to correspond to two light sources in the red image. After step 1611 is completed for the first source in the red image, the bloomed cyan image pixels would have been cleared in step 1714, such that they would not be available for the analysis of the second light source in the red image. Thus, after the source in the cyan image is determined to correspond to the first source in the red image, there would be no source on the cyan image to correspond to the second source in the red image. To prevent this, it is useful to preserve the image memory for the cyan image rather than setting the gray scale value to zero as in step 1714 so that the bloomed source is detected as corresponding to both of the sources in the red image.

Since the red image has already been processed, the memory that stored the red image can be used as a map to indicate which pixels in the cyan image have already been processed. All pixels in the red image memory will have been set to gray scale values less than the minimum threshold as a result of the processing. The pixels that were identified as light sources where zeroed whereas the light sources that were not cleared will have some low gray scale value. This characteristic can be used to set the pixels in the red image memory to serve as markers for processing pixels in the cyan image. In particular, when the seed fill algorithm is executed for the cyan image, step 1714 is replaced by a step that sets the value of the pixel in the red image memory corresponding to the currently analyzed cyan pixel to a marker value. This marker value could be, for example, 255 minus the index of the current light source in the light list. The number 255 is the largest value that can be stored for a gray scale value. In this way, there will be a unique marker stored in the red image memory for pixels analyzed each time step 1611 is executed for a light on the list. In addition to the above change to step 1714, a test must be added after step 1707 to determine if the value of the pixel stored in the red image memory corresponding to the currently analyzed pixel is equal to the marker value for the current light source index, indicating that this pixel has already been recursively visited, in which case the microcontroller would go to step 1719.

Steps 1501 and 1502 for the red image in region 703 and corresponding steps 1506, 1507 and 1508 for the other image in region 702, have now been explained in detail. In step 1503 and 1509, the light source list is analyzed to determine if any of the identified light sources indicate the presence of an oncoming or proceeding vehicle. Fig. 18 is a flow diagram of the series of tests applied to the information gathered on each light source in the light list during the previous analysis steps to determine the type of light source. The tests in Fig. 18 are applied to each source in the list independently.

First, a check is made to see if the recursive seed fill analysis of this light source exceeded the maximum number of subsequent recursive calls allowed as determined in step 1801. If so, the light source is labeled an extremely bright light in step 1803 since the number of pixels in the source must be large to cause a large number of subsequent recursive calls. Next, the TOTALGV variable is compared to a very-bright-light-threshold 1802. If TOTALGV exceeds this threshold, the light is also labeled as extremely bright in step 1803.

If neither of the conditions 1801 or 1802 are met, the light source is analyzed to determine if it has a 60 Hz alternating current (AC) intensity component, indicating that the light source is powered by an AC source, in step 1804, to distinguish it from vehicles which are powered by DC sources. Many streetlights, such as high-pressure sodium and mercury vapor lights, can be effectively distinguished from vehicle headlamps in this way. To detect the AC component, a series of eight 3 X 3 pixel images are acquired at 480 frames per second, for example. The 3 X 3 pixel window is centered on the center of the light source being investigated. The sums of the nine pixels in each of the 8 frames are stored as eight values. These eight values represent the brightness of the source at 1/4 cycle intervals over two cycles. The magnitude of the 60 Hz Fourier series component of these eight samples can be computed by the following formula:

$$AC=(A^2+B^2)^{1/2}$$

$$A=1.0*(F1-FMIN)+(-1.0)*(F3-FMIN)+1.0*(F5-FMIN)+(-1.0)*(F7-FMIN)$$

$$B=1.0*(F0-FMIN)+(-1.0)*(F2-FMIN)+1.0*(F4-FMIN)+(-1.0)*(F6-FMIN)$$

where F1 to F7 refer to the eight summed gray scale values of each of eight frames and FMIN refers to the minimum value of F1 through F7. The value AC is divided by the mean gray scale value of F1 to F8 to give the AC component of interest in step 1804. The scheme is of particular convenience since the sampling rate is exactly four times the frequency of modulation analyzed. If this were not the case, the coefficients for each of F1 through F7 would have to be changed to accommodate this. Additionally, if the system

were to be used in countries were the AC power is not at a 60 Hz frequency, the sampling rate or coefficients would be adjusted.

While the AC detection scheme is described for only one window, it is advantageous to perform the above analysis by imaging the source through both the cyan and red filters, or the red and clear filters, and then using the maximum computed AC component from the two sample sets to determine the AC component for step 1804. This allows for accurate measurement of sources that have either strong short or long wavelength components in their spectrum. If the light source AC component is greater than the minimum threshold as determined in step 1805, the light source is determined to be an AC source as indicated in step 1806. Additional measures may be taken to aid in distinguishing between such nuisance light sources and headlamps, such as to provide a lower AC component threshold for an upper area of the sensed image, while providing a higher threshold for the mid to lower right hand side and an intermediate threshold for the mid to lower left hand side.

The next step is to distinguish light sources which are reflections off road signs or other large objects. Road signs are large compared to the size of the headlamp or tail light. As a result, they tend to be imaged onto many more pixels than a vehicle lamp, unless the lamp is so bright as to bloom in the image. Sign reflection sources may have a large number of pixels, indicated by the SIZE variable, but a lower average gray scale value than vehicle lamps which have a much higher intensity. If the SIZE variable exceeds a given size threshold as determined in step 1807, the average gray scale value (TOTALGV/SIZE) is compared against an average pixel level threshold, which is the maximum sign average gray scale value, in step 1808. If the average gray scale value is less than this threshold, the light source is determined to be a reflection off a sign as indicated in step 1809.

An additional check for yellow signs, which typically occurs in the front of the vehicle when turning through a curved road, is to measure the color of bright objects and determine if they are likely yellow. Even when using the low gain image, the reflection off a nearby sign may saturate several pixels in both subwindows and make relative color discrimination difficult. However, the same high-speed images acquired when performing an AC validation can be used to accurately determine the relative color even for bright images. This is accomplished by looking at the average value of the F1 through F7 frames mentioned hereinabove through each lens. The ratio of the average of the F1 to F7 frames viewed through the red lens to the average of the F1 through F7 frames viewed through

the cyan or clear lens is computed. This ratio will be higher for yellow signs than for white lights but not as high as for tail lights. If this ratio is within a certain range indicating that it is likely a yellow sign, this object can be ignored or the threshold for dimming for this object can be decreased, allowing only extremely bright yellow objects to dim the high beams. By allowing the system to respond to bright yellow objects by dimming the high beams, the headlamp dimmer will respond to a light source in the event that a headlamp is misdiagnosed as a yellow sign.

Once potential nuisance sources are filtered out, the light source can be identified as a headlamp or a tail light. The red to cyan ratio computed in step 1612 is used to determine if the source has sufficient red component to be classified as a tail light in step 1810. If this ratio is lower than a tail light redness threshold, control proceeds to step 1811, where the threshold for consideration as a headlamp is determined. This threshold can be determined in a number of ways, but the most convenient method is to use a two dimensional look-up table if the microcontroller has sufficient read-only memory (ROM) to accommodate the table, as is the case with the Motorola MCS912 family of microcontrollers exemplified herein.

The center of the light source is used as the index into the look-up table to determine the threshold. The look-up tables are created to provide different thresholds for different regions of the field of view. For example, the thresholds for regions of the field of view directly in front of the vehicle are lower than those used for regions off to the side. The look-up table can be optimized for the particular vehicle's high beam emission pattern to determine how annoying the high beams will be to oncoming and preceding traffic at various angles. Ideally, the look-up table used when the vehicle's high beams are activated is different than when they are not. When high beams are off, the thresholds to the side of the vehicle can be lower than they are when high beams are activated. This will prevent the high beams from coming ON when there is a vehicle in front of, but off at an angle to, the controlled vehicle, such as happens when on a curve on an expressway. Also, different lookup tables are used for high and low sensitivity images for much of the same reasons. In fact, the lookup tables may indicate that for certain regions, or all regions of the field of view in high sensitivity image, headlamps be ignored completely. A high sensitivity image is only analyzed if the low sensitivity did not detect oncoming or preceding vehicles, so non-red light sources in a high sensitivity image are most likely very distant headlamps or nuisance sources. Therefore, the high sensitivity images may only be analyzed for red sources.

In step 1812, the TOTALGV variable, which is the total pixel level, is compared to the threshold total pixel level for headlamps as determined from the appropriate look-up table. If this variable is greater than the threshold, the value is compared to the threshold multiplied by a bright multiplier in step 1813. If TOTALGV is greater than this value, the light source is determined to be a bright headlamp in step 1815. If not the light source is a headlamp as indicated in step 1814. The need to distinguish between headlamps and bright headlamps will become clearer in the discussion of the control state of the headlamps. As an alternative to comparing TOTALGV to a threshold times a bright multiplier, yet another look-up table can be provided to dictate thresholds for bright headlamps.

A procedure similar to that just described is performed in step 1816 if the light source is determined to be red. A series of lookup tables are provided for tail light thresholds and the appropriate lookup table is used to determine the threshold for the given light source location. In 1817, the total pixel level for tail light threshold is compared to the TOTALGV variable to determine to light sources bright enough to be of interest. If so, the light source is labeled as a tail light in step 1819. If not, the light source is ignored in step 1820.

Should the cyan lens element 301 be replaced by a clear lens, a different ratio threshold is used in step 1810. In this case, a red light will have approximately the same brightness in both images, but a white or other color light will be substantially brighter when imaged through the clear lens. This ratio is determined based on the analog gain settings for both the red and cyan (or clear) images.

Once the images of the forward field have been acquired and analyzed in step 1405, the state of the headlamps must be determined in step 1406. This is best described by considering a state machine implemented in the microcontroller 1105, which state machine is illustrated in Fig. 19. In the following example it is assumed that headlamp drive 902 is a pulse width modulator drive and the high beam brightness can be varied by changing the duty cycle of the pulse width modulator drive. It is also assumed that the low beam headlamps remain on at 100% duty cycle at all times. Each of the states in Fig. 19 represents a control state of the high beam headlamps. The duty cycle of the high beam headlamps is set to the value indicated by the current control state. The distribution of the duty cycles amongst the control states is non-linear to compensate for the fact that headlamp brightness is a non-linear function of duty cycle and to provide the appearance of a constant percent change from cycle to cycle. Also, there are several states for both

0% and 100% duty cycle, indicating that several states must be traversed before the headlamps begin to go ON or OFF, providing a time delay verification insuring that the detected light source is persistent over several images. The number of states is exemplary only, and those skilled of the art will recognize that it may vary depending on the desired fade ON and OFF rate of the high beams and time between cycles. Additionally, the bright light indicator (which is typically located on the vehicle's dashboard) fades ON as the state moves from state 11 to state 14. The bright light indicator fades OFF as the states move from state 7 to state 4. This provides some hysteresis to avoid flashing the indicator ON and OFF. Alternatively, if the indicator does not fade ON and OFF, the state at which the bright light indicator turns ON will preferably be a higher state than the state at which the bright light indicator turns OFF. In either case, hysterisis is provided for the headlamp control.

After each control cycle, the headlamp control state can remain the same or move to a different state. The rules for moving between states are described with reference to Fig. 20. First, if any of the lights in the light list were determined to have been extremely bright lights in step 2001, the current control state is immediately set to a 0 state in step 2002. This behavior allows bypass of the fade out feature and rapid response to the sudden appearance of headlamps in the forward field of view, such as happens when driving over a hill. Step 2003 determines whether a headlamp or tail light was detected in the light source list. If not, control proceeds to step 2004, wherein it is determined whether the previous state was decremented in the last control cycle.

One of the advantages of the variable beam configuration is the ability to fade in and out high beams. If a reflection from a sign or reflector is misdiagnosed as a vehicle lamp, the high beams will begin to dim. When they do, the reflected source will no longer be present in the image and the high beams will fade back on, likely without bothering the driver. To prevent rapid oscillation between increasing and decreasing headlamp beam brightness, the control state must rest in the current state for one cycle before changing direction. Therefore, step 2004 considers the action during the previous cycle and the system will remain in the current state as indicated in step 2005 if the previous action was to decrement states.

If the action during the previous cycle was not to decrement states, vehicle speed is considered next in step 2006. If a vehicle is stopped at an intersection, it will annoy the driver if the high beams come ON, dim with a passing car, and then come ON again. To prevent this, the high beams are prevented from coming ON if a vehicle is traveling below

a certain speed, for example 20-mph. A decrease in speed below the minimum speed threshold will not necessarily cause the high beams to dim unless there is an oncoming or preceding car present. Alternatively, the high beams can be configured to fade OFF every time the vehicle comes to a stop and then fade ON again once the vehicle begins moving, provided no other vehicles are present. In step 2007, the number of lights in the light list (counted in step 1607) is checked as an indication of whether the driver is driving in city conditions. If there are a large number of lights in the forward field of view, the high beams will not be turned ON. The number of the lights that are alternating current sources may also be considered.

If the criteria of steps 2004, 2006, and 2007 are met, the current control state is incremented one state in step 2008. If this action results in the current control state exceeding state 12 as determined in step 2009, the current control state is set to 15 in step 2010 forcing several time verification states before the beams can be dimmed again.

Should the microcontroller 1105 detect a headlamp or tail light in step 2003, the microcontroller determines whether a bright headlamp was detected in step 2011. If not, the prior cycle action is considered in step 2012 to prevent rapid oscillation between incrementing and decrementing to avoid rapid ongoing oscillations between states. If the prior action was not to increment, the current control state is decremented by 1 state in step 2014. If the new control state is below state 3, as determined in step 2015, the current control state is set to 0 in step 2016.

Finally, if a bright headlamp is detected in step 2011, it is desirable to more rapidly fade out the high beams by decrementing 2 states in step 2018, provided the previous action was not to increment in step 2017, in which case the current state is decremented only one state.

A large number of variations of the scheme just described are possible. For example, more states can be added to increase or decrease the time it takes to fade the high beams in and out. The number of required states will depend upon the image acquisition and analysis cycle time. Ideally, the fade in/out period is about one to two seconds. Another alternative is to decrement states as a function of the brightest light source detected in the light list rather than to decrement a single state for every cycle. In this way, the brightness of the high beam is adjusted as a function of the distance of an oncoming or preceding vehicle rather than just fading in and out. This is particularly advantageous where the control mechanism is to vary the beam angle of the high beams rather than the intensity of the beams. Yet another alternative is to decrement states as a

function of the current speed of the controlled vehicle. The rate at which states are decremented could increase at high vehicle speeds, since oncoming cars will overtake the controlled vehicle at a more rapid rate. Yet another alternative is to decrement states as a vehicle slows down. This would allow the high beams to fade out as a vehicle comes to a stop: a feature that may be desirable for some drivers. Finally, it should be noted that the use of discrete states is only exemplary. The intensity and/or aim of the high beam headlamps can be controlled by continuum of values from fully ON to fully OFF.

The previous discussions described in detail the operation of one cycle of the headlamp dimmer control sequence. This sequence is repeated indefinitely as long as the device is on. Depending on the time to complete one cycle, the above procedure may be interrupted to acquire rear glare sensor measurements for the electrochromic mirror. Additionally, the driver may interrupt the above sequence by activating the manual high beam switch generating input signal 1123 (Fig. 11). This feature is necessary to allow the driver to override improper behavior of the control system or to use the high beams to alert other drivers through flashing the high beams.

Some additional features may be provided with the above-described hardware and software configuration. One such feature is daytime running lights (DRLs). On some vehicles, DRLs are provided by operating the high beams at a reduced intensity. By using the PWM drive circuitry provided, the high beams can be set to a reduced intensity during daylight conditions. The ambient light sensor 1107 can be used to determine daylight conditions and switch the headlamps to normal low beam operation at dusk. In particular, the ambient light level can have one or more light level thresholds associated therewith. When the ambient light level is a daytime one threshold, the daytime running lights will be ON. Below that threshold, but above another lower threshold, the low beams can be ON. Below that lower bright activate ambient light level threshold, the high beams may be operated automatically if the driver does not manually disable high beam operation.

Even without the use of DRLs, it is desirable to have automatic activation of the low beam headlamps at dusk. This control can be provided by the use of the ambient light sensor 1107. For better performance, an additional light sensor can be provided which senses light from a direction upwards rather than looking straightforward as the ambient light sensor 1107 does. Such a sky sensor arrangement is disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/491,192, entitled VEHICLE EQUIPMENT CONTROL WITH SEMICONDUCTOR LIGHT SENSORS, filed by Jon Bechtel et al. on January 25, 2000. Alternatively, a few rows of pixels in the image sensor can be used to image a region of

the sky above the horizon. An imaging system disclosing such an arrangement is described in U.S. Patent No. 6,130,421. The ability to image through both the red and cyan filters can help to distinguish between clear and overcast conditions and to detect a sunset.

It is envisioned that the system can detect a tunnel using the image sensor and a sky sensor. In particular, a potential tunnel condition is detected when a large area of contiguous dark pixels is detected that meets a size threshold level and is located in the center of the image, under daytime ambient light conditions. If the dark area grows while the ambient light conditions continue to sense day ambient light conditions, the potential tunnel condition will continue. If the image sensor continues to see a large dark area forward of the vehicle when the daylight ambient conditions are no longer detected, the vehicle will be determined to be in a tunnel, and the headlamps will be ON. The headlamps will remain on until the daylight ambient conditions are detected, at which time the headlamps will be turned OFF and daylight running lights will be turned ON if the controlled vehicle has daytime running lights.

SPEED VARYING THRESHOLDS

The speed input 1117 can be used in additional ways by microcontroller 1115. For example, when driving on an expressway, it is necessary to detect oncoming cars in the opposite lane, which is usually separated by a median. Therefore, the microcontroller must be more sensitive to oncoming headlamps at larger angles than would be necessary for back-road driving where there is no median separating oncoming traffic. Incorporating a wide field of view for back-road driving has the disadvantage of increasing the likelihood that the image sensor will detect house lights, which are typically incandescent. Incandescent light sources will not be filtered by the AC rejection algorithm. Such house lights are not typically present on the side of the freeway. By increasing the sensitivity of the device to objects at higher angles when the vehicle is traveling at higher speeds, such as speeds in excess of 50 to 60 mph, the system will be able to sense cross-median traffic on expressways without increased sensitivity to house lights on back roads. It is envisioned that the field of view could be increased when the vehicle speed exceeds 65 mph and decreased when the vehicle speed passes below 60 mph.

In particular, it is envisioned that prior to step 1601, additional steps can be provided to make the field of view speed sensitive. These steps are illustrated in Fig. 21. The vehicle speed is input in step 2101. The microcontroller determines in step 2103 whether the status is currently a wide view for expressway driving. If it is not, the

microcontroller 1105 determines whether the speed is greater than 55 mph. If not, the status does not change. If the vehicle speed is determined to be greater than 55 mph in step 2105, the field of view of the image sensor 201 is increased as indicated in step 2107. The field of view in the horizontal direction can be increased by 30 to 150 percent, and advantageously 60 to 125 percent, relative to the narrower field of view at lower speeds. If it was determined in step 2101 that the controlled vehicle 100 is in the expressway state, the microcontroller 1105 determines in step 2109 whether the vehicle speed has dropped below 45 mph. If it has, the microcontroller reduces the field of view of image sensor 201 to its narrower non-expressway field of view. In one advantageous embodiment, the field of view remains the same at all speeds but the thresholds for responding to lights at higher angles are decreased as speed increases. This is advantageous because it allows detection of very bright objects at high angles when the vehicle is traveling at slow speeds, but it is not sensitive to less bright objects, such as house lights or street signs, when traveling at slow speeds. In particular, at high speeds reducing the thresholds increases the sensitivity to cross-median traffic. The thresholds are reduced more significantly to the left than to the right since cross median traffic is to the left. This property can be reversed for left-hand-drive countries.

It is envisioned that the field of view will be varied by increasing and decreasing the width of the pixels used by the image sensor in the manner described above when the high beams are ON or OFF.

According to another aspect of the invention, the integration time for the pixels of the image array sensor can be increased at higher speeds. This increase in integration period increases the sensitivity of the image array sensor. The system is thus able to detect an oncoming vehicle sooner. This may be particularly advantageous, as oncoming cars are likely to be traveling faster when the controlled vehicle is traveling faster. Accordingly, providing the light control system with a higher sensitivity to shorten the response time will better emulate a desired dimming characteristic of the headlamps by dimming the headlamps at a desired vehicle distance. To provide this function, in step 2107 the microcontroller 1105 increases the sensitivity and/or widens the horizontal viewing angle, whereas in step 2111, the microcontroller decreases the sensitivity and/or narrows the horizontal viewing angle.

It is further envisioned that adjustments can be made to the threshold in step 1707 as a function of speed. Such a system can be implemented using a look-up table stored in read only memory. Fig. 22 illustrates regions of the image sensor array 301, with the

regions radiating outwardly from the center. The regions may not be symmetrical since oncoming traffic usually occurs more to the left and signs and nuisance light sources are more likely to the right in right side drive countries. The look-up table sets a respective threshold for each of the regions 1-6 with the regions having sequentially, incrementally greater thresholds moving outwardly from the center. Thus the center region 1 will have the lowest threshold and the outer peripheral 6 will have the highest threshold. In addition, the thresholds at different angles will vary as a function of speed, such that at higher speeds, the thresholds will be lower in regions 3 through 5 than they will be at higher speeds. For example, where two fields of view are provided, one table will contain respective thresholds for pixels in the regions for lower speeds and another table will contain respective thresholds in regions for the higher speeds. Each table will assign an integration time and/or thresholds for use in analyzing different portions of the field of view. Because the greater the distance from the center the greater the viewing angle of the scene image, lowering the threshold in the outer regions increases the system's responsiveness to light sources at wider angles to the controlled vehicle.

Either the thresholds or the integration times for the pixel sensors of the image array, or both the thresholds and the integration times, can be changed to increase the sensitivity of the sensor at different speeds. Thus, it is envisioned that the field of view can be the same at both high and low speeds. However, the thresholds or the sensitivity (*i.e.*, the integration period or the amplifier gain) can be altered such that at low speeds images viewed at wide angles will have little impact on the dimming decision whereas at high speeds the images viewed at wide angles will have substantially more impact on the dimming decision at high speeds. It is further envisioned that instead of using look-up tables, an algorithm can be used to alter the sensitivity of the light sensor as a function of the angle of the image being viewed. Such an algorithm can be used to reduce the memory requirements for the system at the expense of requiring greater processing power to implement the function.

TURNING

As indicated above, it is disadvantageous to have a wide field of view when traveling slowly, such as occurs when traveling on back roads. However, when turning, it is necessary to have a wide field of view so that the image sensor can detect other vehicles that will come in front of the controlled vehicle prior to the controlled vehicle's headlamps striking the other vehicle. It may also be desirable to lower the thresholds for those regions of the sensed image in the direction of the turn. A subroutine that the

microcontroller 1105 uses for changing the viewing angle of the image sensor is disclosed in Fig. 23. It is envisioned that the subroutine will be executed each time a turn condition is initiated. For example, the microcontroller may detect any one or more of the following: activation of a vehicle turn signal alone or in combination with braking; a change in vehicle heading detected by the compass; global positioning information; and change in direction of the vehicle steering wheel or front tires. Responsive to such an event, the microcontroller 1105 will input the criteria to be used in making a decision as to whether the field of view needs to be altered. For example, a compass input, an input from a turn signal, global positioning system (GPS) receiver information, wheel turn indication from the vehicle steering system, vehicle speed, gyroscope output, tire speed sensors of an anti-lock brake system (ABS), or a combination of these inputs may be input in step 2301. Additionally, motion analysis (discussed below) may be used to sense turning of the vehicle.

In step 2303, the microcontroller 1105 will determine whether the criteria input in step 2301 indicate that the field of view should be altered. For example, when the vehicle turn signal is ON, and the vehicle is slowing down, the viewing angle sensitivity can be altered in the direction of the turn signal. Alternatively, actuation of the vehicle brake system in combination with a change in vehicle heading greater than a threshold angle of change could trigger a change in sensor viewing angle. In particular, the compass sensor information can be compared to a threshold change of direction to determine if the controlled vehicle 100 is turning, and responsive thereto the microcontroller 1105 can increase the sensitivity of the image sensor 201 and associated circuitry to light sources in the direction that the vehicle is turning. In order to implement such a turning control, the compass must generate vehicle heading information that the microcontroller can use. Commercially available compasses of the type used in vehicles generate an output, which will operate within 2° to 3° of accuracy as the vehicle turns. As a consequence, the rate at which the vehicle heading is changing and the direction that the vehicle is turning can be determined from the compass output or GPS information. In one embodiment, a compass is integrated into an electrochromic mirror with an automatic headlamp dimmer and the compass sensor signal is utilized to enhance the performance of the automatic headlamp dimmer.

If it is determined in step 2303 that a shift of the sensitivity pattern is required, the image sensor will shift its sensitivity as indicated in step 2305. For example, the high

sensitivity region 1 of the image sensor will generally be in the center of the array such that lights straightforward of the vehicle will have the strongest impact on the light control process. This is particularly advantageous as the brightest light produced by the controlled vehicle illuminates straight out in front of the controlled vehicle. As the controlled vehicle turns, the center axis of each of the regions 1 through 5 will shift as indicated in step 2305. As a consequence, these regions shift in the direction that the vehicle is turning such that they are centered to the right or left instead of being centered on the Y axis (Fig. 22). The sensitivity of the pixels in array 301 will thus shift right as the vehicle turns right, and shift left as the vehicle turns left. The degree that the sensitivity field shifts can vary depending upon the rate of change of the vehicle as well as the speed of the vehicle.

It is envisioned that the sensitivity can be changed using the lookup table. In particular the lookup table can contain respective integration periods and thresholds according to the location of pixels such that the sensitivity is as shown in Fig. 22 when the vehicle is traveling straight. As the vehicle turns, the addresses associated with columns of pixels may be altered such that the integration periods and thresholds for pixels in the column will shift left or right.

If the change is not sufficient to change the sensitivity, as determined in step 2303, the microcontroller will determine in step 2307 if the vehicle is going straight. The microcontroller will continue to monitor the rate of change of the vehicle heading until the vehicle is heading generally straight, as indicated in step 2307. It will be recognized that subroutine may be run once as an interrupt routine such that other subroutines may be run in between execution of routine 2300.

It is further envisioned that adjustments may be made in the vertical direction, in addition to the horizontal direction, for example if a change in vehicle inclination is detected.

LIGHT LIST HISTORY

Information about lights from previous frames can be useful in evaluating current frames. However, there is typically insufficient memory in low cost microcontrollers to store previous frames so as to retain a complete history of each frame's content. To minimize the memory requirements for implementing the system, while retaining some useful historical information, the brightness and location of one or more of the brightest lights detected in one or more previous frames are stored for use when processing a later frame. The entire light list from a previous frame need not be stored, unless significant memory is available. It is also useful to store the brightness and location of only the

brightest lights detected in one or more preceding frames. This information can be used to provide fast return to bright. After an oncoming car 105 has passed the controlled vehicle 100, it is useful to return to the high beam state as soon as possible. The night vision of the driver in the controlled vehicle may be temporarily impaired by the lights of the oncoming vehicle. The impact of this loss of night vision may be minimized by providing as much scene illumination as possible, as soon as possible, following passage of a vehicle. The microcontroller 1105 uses the light list history information to implement a fast return-to-bright. In particular, after step 2007 in Fig. 20, the microcontroller 1105 can determine whether the current frame is suddenly clear of bright light sources following a preceding frame that contained a very bright headlamp. In such a case, it is likely that the bright headlamp has just passed the controlled vehicle. If this situation occurs, the normal gradual, delayed fade-in period can be bypassed, or partially bypassed, and the high beams can be incremented by more than one state, such as by eight states (Fig. 19), to return to bright high beams more quickly.

Another scenario where the opposite result is desired occurs when the controlled vehicle comes up behind a preceding vehicle 110. As the controlled vehicle 100 approaches the preceding vehicle 110, the image sensor will detect the preceding vehicle's tail lights and dim the controlled vehicle's high beams responsive thereto. When the controlled vehicle moves to the side to drive around the slower preceding vehicle, the tail lights of the preceding vehicle will move out of the field of view of the image sensor. However, if the controlled vehicle's bright lights are activated, they will shine into the eyes of the driver of the vehicle being passed via the exterior rearview mirror. This is particularly problematic when the controlled vehicle is passing a truck, as it may take a long time to pass the truck. In this situation, the microcontroller can include a decision step following step 2007 to determine whether the previous frame included a tail light, and if so, to set a predetermined delay before the high beam headlamps can be activated. Where the high beam lights are dimmed responsive to preceding tail lights, a long delay will thus be introduced before turning the high beams back ON. For example, the high beams may come on several seconds after the tail lights move out of the scene being imaged. Motion analysis (described below) may be used to determine the rate of overtaking a preceding vehicle or the rate at which a preceding vehicle may drive out of range to thereby enable additional control over the headlamps.

The light history can also be used to select an integration period for the image array sensor pixels. In particular, it is envisioned that the amplifier gain 303 for the pixels

can have different gains or different integration intervals to increase the dynamic range of the light sensor. For example, three different gains or integration periods could be supported. A bright light will saturate all but the lowest gain, whereas a dim light such as a tail light can not be detected at a low gain. The light history can be used to remember that the sensor was washed out even at low gain, and an ultra low sensitivity can be used to detect lights.

Another use for the light list history is determining traffic density. In particular, the traffic density can be ascertained from the time period count between detecting oncoming headlamps. Thus, in or near a city where traffic is heavier, the system can respond to that condition by having a relatively long delay period. On the other hand, where traffic is light, such that oncoming traffic is less likely, the delay to turn on the bright lights can be short. It is envisioned that as the traffic increases, the return-to-bright time period will lengthen, whereas as the traffic decreases, the return-to-bright period will shorten. It is further envisioned that a number of different criteria could be used, such as the number of frames since a vehicle was previously detected or the percentage of time that the bright lights were on over a predetermined sampling period. In these ways, the number of objects detected over time can be used in the control of the headlamps, and in particular, to at least partially inhibit turning on the high beams.

It is envisioned that where a vehicle includes an electrochromic mirror glare sensor to detect light from the rear of the vehicle, or any other device having a rearward directed optical sensor, such as a rear vision system, additional information can be accessed which is useful for controlling the return-to-bright interval. In particular, when the bright headlamps are dimmed because of tail lights from a preceding vehicle, the headlamps can return to bright a predetermined time after the tail lights disappear from in front of the vehicle or when headlamps are detected by the rear glare sensor in the rearview mirror, whichever occurs first. Where headlamps from a trailing vehicle are detected immediately prior to the disappearance of tail lights from a preceding vehicle, the use of the rearward sensor for detecting a return to bright condition will be precluded. Additional considerations can be used in making the return-to-bright decision. For example, a minimum and a maximum interval can be required before return-to-bright.

It is envisioned that the system will only provide a variable return-to-bright interval under certain conditions, such that the return-to-bright interval will typically be a default time interval. However, a fast return-to-bright interval will occur following a condition where really bright headlamps are detected and then disappear, as such bright

lights will reduce the driver's night vision. Additionally, a slow return to bright condition would be used following disappearance of a preceding tail light since the driver's vision will not have been impaired and it is desirable to avoid shinning the high beams into the eyes of a vehicle being passed.

It is further envisioned that integration periods in the current frame may be adjusted based upon measurements made in a previous frame. In particular, an extremely short integration period can be used for the image sensor 301 where the lowest sensitivity measurements in a previous frame resulted in saturation of the light sensor. To the other extreme, where the previous frame's most sensitive measurements did result in detection of tail lights, a very long integration interval can be used for the image sensor 301 to look for tail lights in the current frame. Thus where three integration periods are typically used, two additional integration periods can be selectively used when the conditions necessitate either an extremely short or long integration interval.

Another use of the light list history is to distinguish signs and reflectors based on the movement of the objects in the image over time. Over a sequence of frames, reflectors and signs will typically move more rapidly toward a side of the image than will vehicles traveling generally in parallel with the controlled vehicle. Object lists may be created as the images are captured as disclosed above and in commonly assigned U.S. Patent Application No. _____(Attorney Docket No. GEN10 P380), entitled IMAGE PROCESSING SYSTEM TO CONTROL VEHICLE HEADLAMPS OR OTHER VEHICLE EQUIPMENT, filed on March 5, 2001, by Joseph Stam et al. The object lists created may be stored in memory from frame to frame to determine the behavior of a particular object in the image over time. For instance, reflections from signs or other stationary objects can be identified by the motion of this object in subsequent frames. Flashing overhead stop or caution lamps can be identified by their rate of flashing. After each frame is analyzed, the object least created from this frame is kept in memory and light lists from new frames are stored in a different location. The techniques disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. _____ (Attorney Docket No. GEN10 P380) greatly reduce the amount of memory required for image analysis by not requiring an entire frame to be stored. Therefore, it is practical to store the object lists from several subsequent frames in the amount of memory typically provided in low cost controllers. The number of object lists stored from previous frames depends on the available memory. As few as one previous object list can greatly assist in identifying the motion of an object.

To facilitate tracking of objects over time, additional properties of objects can be added as entries into the object list. For a headlamp control application, an object list entry may contain:

X Center	X coordinate of the center of the object
Y Center	Y coordinate of the center of the object
Total GV	Sum of all the gray scale values of all pixels in the object
Size	Total number of pixels in the object
Max	The gray scale value of the brightest pixel
Redness	Brightness ratio between the clear and the red images for this object
PrevFrameIndex	Index of a light in a previous frame which is the same light as this one (if any)
Gain	Which image in the cycle; high, medium, or low gain
Vector	The direction in which the light is traveling

The total number of objects that can be stored depends upon the available memory. For example, the list above would require 9 bytes per entry. If, for example, 500 bytes of memory are available, 50 objects could be tracked. The object list memory may be allocated as a contiguous array of object entries. Pointers indicate the start of the object lists for the current frame and previous frames. The newest objects identified replace the oldest objects in the list.

The objects in the new object list are then compared to the objects in the previous object list to determine if any of the new objects are the same as previous objects. A comparison is made by determining if the X and Y center of an object in the current list is within a radius of a certain number of pixels from an object in the previous list. The radius threshold is determined by calculating the maximum amount an object can reasonably move in an image from frame to frame. This number is a function of the resolution of the sensor and may also be a function of the vehicle speed and turn rate. It is possible for two lights in the current list to be daughters of the same light in the previous list. This may occur as a vehicle approaches from a distance and the two headlamps, which before were imaged as one blob, become separated in the image.

Once an object in a previous light list is determined to be the same object as in the current light list, a motion vector can be computed to quantify the rate and direction of

motion of the object. Motion detection can be used to distinguish between signs and reflectors, street lights, and vehicles. As illustrated in Fig. 39, the headlamps 3901 of oncoming vehicles tend to move down and to the left of the image over a sequence of frames, while signs and reflectors 3903 tend to move down and to the right. Overhead street lights 3905 tend to move upward. While other techniques are disclosed herein for distinguishing between these objects, motion detection can further increase the accuracy at which the system is able to make such distinctions.

Further, such motion detection can be used to distinguish between headlamps and tail lights of vehicles and thereby further enhance distinction that is otherwise based on color analysis.

Fig. 40 shows a functional block diagram of one embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the system 4000 includes an image sensor 201, an lens 202, a previous light list(s) 4001, and an image processing routine (seed fill) 4003, which receives data from image sensor 201 and accesses previous light list(s) 4001 to generate a new light list 4005. New light list 4005 includes information from which various parameters including the brightness 4007, position 4009, size 4011, color 4013, AC component 4015, and motion 4017 of each object may be derived. The system 4000 further includes decision rules 4020 that control the exterior vehicle lights including the low beam headlamps 4021 and the high-beam headlamps 4023 by adjusting their activation state, brightness, aim, and/or focus to vary the illumination pattern produced thereby. Decision rules 4020 may control the exterior lights as a function of any one or combination of parameters 4007-4017 as well as ambient light levels 4025, vehicle turn rate 4027, vehicle speed 4029, and the state of user actuated switches 4031 (as discussed further below). Decision rules 4020 may be implemented in a logic circuit (*i.e.*, microcomputer), a fuzzy logic circuit, or a neural network.

An example of how decision rules 4020 may use more than one parameter to control the exterior lights is to reduce the perceived brightness or otherwise modify the glare area of the present beam illumination pattern when a nearby headlamp is detected. Decision rules 4020 may determine that a nearby headlamp is present when the detected headlamp has high brightness and a relatively high amount of motion. A distant headlamp, on the other hand, would have low brightness and a relatively low amount of amount of motion. A sign would have a low level of brightness but have a relatively high amount of motion.

AUTOMATIC AIM CALIBRATION

Variations in the orientation of the image array sensor relative to the windshield angle may result in variations in aim of the sensor, which may negatively impact the performance of the dimmer. These variations can be calibrated out over time using a maximum bound placed on the expected variation in mounting. In general, on straight roads, distant oncoming headlamps will be coming from directly ahead of the optical sensor system 102. The calibration system uses faint headlamps detected near the center of the image, and preferably only those within a center window corresponding to the expected mounting variations. Such headlamps meeting certain criteria will have their position averaged with other faint headlamps meeting the same criteria. Over time, this average of these lights should correspond to the center of the field of view. This average value can be used to offset the image window relative to the X and Y-axis in Fig. 22.

More particularly, in order to detect a flat straight road, from which a misalignment of the optical sensor system can be detected, a variety of different orientation inputs can be used. The speed of the vehicle may be required to remain in a certain range between 35 to 50 mph. The vehicle can be determined to be traveling straight using the compass, GPS, or monitoring the operation of the vehicle steering system. If the heading changes during the test, the measurement will be considered to be in error. If the vehicle has equipment for providing an elevation measurement, any changes in the vehicle's elevation during the calibration process will result in an error. The elevation measurement may thus be used in determining whether to adjust the field of view.

A distant vehicle is initially detected by sensing white light near the center of the image, which is faint at the highest sensitivity (longest integration period) of the image sensor. As this light gets brighter, the system monitors the orientation inputs to detect whether the road continues to be flat and straight. If it remains flat and straight for a period of time which is at least twice the time period required for the vehicles 100, 105 to pass, the measurement will be valid. The center point detected initially will then be averaged with previous valid measurements, and the average measurement will be considered to be the center of the image. This will be the average X and Y coordinates, which together will mark the center of the image sensor. This location can be saved in EEPROM or flash ROM.

Another method of aiming calibration is to take a very high gain image and look for the reflection of the road. The average point where this reflection occurs can be used to calibrate the aim.

LIQUID CRYSTAL FILTER

An alternative optical system may include a liquid crystal filter 2405 that can be used to selectively provide both a red and a blue filter, whereby red and blue images may be viewed by an image sensor 2401 through a single lens structure 2403. In such a structure, the image sensor 2401 need only have one imaging area (*e.g.*, array area 702 instead of array areas 702 and 703 as required with two lenses). The filter 2405 is implemented using a liquid crystal colored light switch 2503 (Fig. 25) electrically connected to microcontroller 1105 through conductors 2413 and 2411. The filter includes a neutral polarizer 2501, a liquid crystal shutter 2503, a red polarizer 2505, and a blue polarizer 2507. The neutral polarizer 2501 and red polarizer 2505 are oriented with their polarizing axis aligned in one direction and the blue polarizer 2507 is oriented with its polarizing axis oriented orthogonally to the red and neutral polarizer. The liquid crystal shutter 2503 is implemented using a twisted neumatic (TN) liquid crystal shutter selectively energized under the control of microcontroller 1105. In particular, when the shutter is not energized, the liquid crystal device transmits the red light. When the liquid crystal is energized, the liquid crystal device transmits blue light.

It is thus possible to measure the relative intensities of two colors of light using a single photo sensor or image area. In the unenergized state all visible light is polarized in the horizontal direction by the neutral polarizer, rotated 90° by the unenergized TN liquid crystal cell to the vertical direction, and then all but the red light will be absorbed by the horizontal red polarizer. The red light will then pass through the vertical blue polarizer. In the energized state all visible light will be polarized in the horizontal direction by the horizontal neutral polarizer, and not rotated by the energized TN liquid crystal cell, all visible light will be transmitted by the horizontal red polarizer and all but blue light will be absorbed by the vertical blue polarizer. The liquid crystal device can be used as a high-speed light switch to alternate between transmission of blue light and red light. The relative intensities of the red and blue light components of an object or light source can then be determined. Alternatively, a green polarizer can be substituted for either the red or blue polarizer to switch between transmission of blue and green or red and green light respectively. Furthermore, a clear polarizer can be substituted for the blue polarizer to switch between red and clear.

WINDSHIELD WIPER

To improve dimmer performance when it is raining, it is useful to synchronize the acquisition of images with the windshield wipers. For example, a signal can be provided from the wiper motors to indicate the position of the wipers. Immediately after the wiper passes over the sensor, and image can be taken to look for cars. Most importantly, it is necessary to avoid taking images while the wiper is over the image sensor 301.

Where the controlled vehicle 100 includes a moisture sensor, the moisture sensor can monitor the windshield wiper. A moisture sensor providing such information is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,923,027, entitled MOISTURE SENSOR AND WINDSHIELD FOG DETECTOR, issued to Joseph Stam et al. on July 13, 1999.

Information regarding the on/off status of the windshield wipers may also be used to control the vehicle headlamps. When the headlamp controller determines that the windshield wipers have been turned on, the headlamp controller may turn on the low beam headlamps of the vehicle assuming they are not already on. In addition, the headlamp controller may disable the headlamps from operation in a high beam state when the vehicle windshield wipers are activated. This may be accomplished by simply maintaining the headlamps in the low beam state when in an automatic control state or otherwise deactivating the automatic control state such that the high beams may not automatically be turned on while the wipers are activated. Additionally, the headlamp controller could disable any manual activation of the high beams so long as the windshield wipers are turned on. Also, foul weather lights, particularly the fog lights, may be automatically activated when the wipers are on.

The headlamp controller may receive a signal over the vehicle bus from the windshield wiper controller indicating that the windshield wipers are activated. Alternatively, the headlamp controller may determine that the windshield wipers are activated upon detecting a wiper within the scene imaged by the imaging system. As yet another alternative, the headlamp controller may receive a signal from a rain sensor that is used to control the windshield wipers indicating that a control signal has been transmitted to activate the windshield wipers.

DECELERATION

In addition to varying the image sensor operation depending upon the vehicle speed, other speed criteria can be used to control the operation of the vehicle headlamps. Turning on the high beams may be inhibited when the vehicle is decelerating, when the brakes are actuated, or when the vehicle is traveling slowly. This prevents high beams

from coming on when coasting to a stop or approaching an intersection. Deceleration can be detected from the speed input to the microcontroller 1105 (Fig. 11).

BAD PIXEL CALIBRATION

An image sensor may contain one or more bad pixels. These bad pixels may manifest themselves as extremely sensitive pixels, which may cause "white-spots" in the image. Such "white-spots" will cause false light detection in the image if the sensor is not calibrated to remove them from calculations. During production tests, the location of these white spots can be measured and stored in a programmable memory associated with microcontroller 1105. To compensate for such bad pixels during normal operation of the image array sensor, after an image is acquired, the pixel value at the white-spot location may be replaced with the average value of its neighboring pixels.

It is possible that a white-spot may form during use of the image sensor, such that it is not detected during production tests. Such a situation will cause the device to be inoperable. To avoid this problem, it is desirable to calibrate the white-spot out of the image after recognizing the bad pixel. In order to detect the white spot, it is necessary to detect that the pixel remains "lit-up" in several images, and preferably over an extended period of time. A bad pixel will stand out if it is repeatedly lit-up when neighboring pixels are dark. When such a pixel is detected, it can be added to the list of bad pixels.

It is envisioned that bad pixels can be periodically tested to determine if their performance has improved. This can be accomplished by monitoring a sequence of images to determine whether the center pixel is dark while the adjoining pixels are not dark.

"PICKET FENCE"

In controlling the vehicle headlamps, it is desirable to avoid a condition where the headlamp high beams flash ON and OFF at a relatively rapid rate, this is particularly important if non-variable two-state headlamps are used. For example, a sign along the road can cause flashing of the headlamps between bright and normal levels. This occurs when reflections of the bright high beams from a sign are bright enough to cause dimming of the high beams and reflections of headlamp low beams are low enough that the bright high beams are turned ON. The condition can be avoided by having the system look at the object that caused the high beams to turn OFF. When this condition occurs, the light level at that position is ignored while the pixels around the object are not ignored for a predetermined number of cycles, such as ten cycles. The length of time that the object is ignored can be variable as a function of the vehicle's speed. The higher the vehicle's

speed, the shorter the period that the object will be ignored. During the time period, the lights will be controlled using pixels other than those associated with the object being ignored.

A reflector can be distinguished from an active source of light by flashing the vehicle headlamps off. The time period that the headlamps are off is so short that the image sensor can sense the loss of light even though the human eye will not perceive, or barely perceive, that the lights were off. A light emitting diode headlamp described hereinbelow can be turned OFF and ON very rapidly, such that it will be off for such a short period of time. In operation, the microcontroller 1105 controls the headlamp high or low beams to turn OFF, and controls the image sensor to image the scene during that brief time period that the headlamps are off. The off time period may for example be 10 ms.

FOG DETECTOR

It is desirable for the vehicle to reliably detect a foggy condition, and in response thereto, to automatically turn ON or OFF front and rear fog lamps. Effective fog detectors have not been available heretofore. Fog may be detected by using the image sensor and optical system for the headlamp ON/OFF and headlamp dimmer control. Fog can be detected by a reduced scene contrast along with scene ambient light level determinations. The ambient light can be determined from the mean gray scale value of the pixels imaging the forward scene or by a separate ambient light sensor, such as the ambient light sensor used for the electrochromic mirror. It is envisioned that the mean can be a clipped mean value. The variance of the gray scale values of the pixels provides a measure of the contrast in the image. Alternatively, the variance can be determined from the standard deviation of the pixels, and in particular, when the standard deviation is less than a standard deviation threshold level, the presence of fog is identified responsive to which the fog lights can be turned ON. Alternatively, the individual differences between the average pixel level and each individual pixel level can be added for the entire image sensor, and when this total variance exceeds a variance threshold level, the presence of fog is detected. Either of these examples of fog criteria can be used as a measure of contrast.

Several additional factors may also be considered. The contrast value may be an average contrast value over several images. The contrast may be determined in row-wise fashion to determine the level of fog. Various regions of the scene may be considered independently. If two color lenses are present as in the headlamp dimmer, color information may be used. The actual values of the brightness/contrast ratios and the proper image sensor exposure times should be determined experimentally. The device can

be set to only operate between a predetermined range of brightness levels, such that if the ambient level is too high or too low, the fog detector will not operate, and manual override will be required. The ambient light conditions for fog may for example be between 1 and 1000 lux. Both the image sensor and the ambient light sensor can be used to detect fog. If the ambient light level detected by the ambient light sensor is within the appropriate range, an image of the forward scene is acquired with a sensitivity set to the average gray scale value of the pixels (*e.g.*, 128 lux). If the contrast at a given brightness level is below a predetermined threshold level, it is determined that fog is present.

SNOW AND FOG DETECTOR

It is also desirable for a vehicle to detect when it is snowing. Typically, in heavy snow conditions, it is not desirable to activate the high beams. Further, even if it is not snowing heavily, the snow may reflect the light from the high beams in such a way that the headlamp controller mistakenly perceives an oncoming vehicle based upon the reflected light from the controlled vehicle's own headlamps.

To detect snowfall, it is preferable to provide a sensing system that senses light levels forward and above the vehicle. To obtain the light level above the vehicle, a separate light sensor may be positioned to sense light from the sky above the vehicle. Such a sky sensor may include a single pixel sensor positioned at a 45° angle relative to the sensor used to sense light forward of the vehicle. The sensor used to sense light forward of the vehicle may be a single pixel sensor or the image array sensor used to image the scene forward of the vehicle for headlamp control. The values sensed by the forward and sky sensor may be averaged over a period of time. Theses sensors may be constructed in accordance with the teachings of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/307,191, entitled PHOTODIODE LIGHT SENSOR, filed on May 7, 1999 by Robert H. Nixon et al. and U.S. Patent Application No. 09/491,192, entitled VEHICLE EQUIPMENT CONTROL WITH SEMICONDUCTOR LIGHT SENSORS, filed on January 25, 2000, by Jon H. Bechtel et al.

The controller is coupled to receive the output of both the forward sensor and the sky sensor and compares the relative brightness in front of the vehicle with that above the vehicle. In some conditions, it may be desirable to compare the relative brightness as the brightness of the vehicle's headlamps increases. The headlamp controller determines that it is snowing or foggy when a ratio of the relative brightness forward of the vehicle to that

above the vehicle reaches a threshold as the brightness of the vehicle's headlamps increases due to the reflection of the headlamp light off the snow in the forward scene.

When the controller determines that snow is falling, it may activate the low beam headlamps if they are not already activated and can disable the high beams from being activated either through automatic control or manually. Further, automatic control may be disabled and foul weather lights may be activated. Additionally, the brightness of the vehicle's tail lights and/or brake lights may be increased to increase the visibility of the vehicle to other rearward vehicles.

The headlamp controller may also infer that the conditions outside of the vehicle are snowy or foggy when the driver turns the front windshield defroster fan to full speed. In such an event, the controller may also disable the headlamps from operation in a high beam state and may disable further automatic control.

The techniques described in this section are particularly well-suited for detecting fog at night, while the techniques described in the preceding section is better suited for detecting fog during daytime.

DAYTIME RUNNING LIGHT AND TAIL LIGHT CONTROL

As discussed above, daytime running lights (DRLs) are provided on some vehicles. As also discussed above, DRLs are provided by operating the high beams at a reduced intensity by changing the PWM drive signal delivered to the high beams during daylight conditions. For this purpose, an ambient light sensor 1107 can be used to determine daylight conditions and switch the headlamps to DRL operation when daylight is detected.

The controller may also utilize the sensed ambient light level to turn on the low beams when it is sufficiently dark. Additional the DRLs may be controlled to vary their intensity during daylight conditions. Ambient light levels may vary considerably from the brightest of daylight conditions to the conditions existing just prior to activation of the low beam headlamps at dusk. There have been complaints about the brightness of DRLs when the ambient light levels are relatively dark. In the brightest conditions, however, the DRLs are less bothersome because they appear to be less bright relative to the ambient light levels surrounding the vehicle. Accordingly, the headlamp control circuit may be configured to vary the brightness of the DRLs in response to the ambient light levels sensed by an ambient light sensor. Specifically, the control circuit may increase the brightness of the DRLs in response to increasing ambient brightness.

A similar problem exists with respect to a vehicle's tail lights and brake lights. Tail lights and brake lights preferably have brightness levels that are sufficient to allow

drivers to the rear of the controlled vehicle to easily determine whether the tail lights and brake lights are on or off regardless of the ambient light level. On the other hand, at nighttime, tail lights and brake lights can be too bright so as to adversely affect the night vision of drivers to the rear of the vehicle. Accordingly, it is preferable to decrease the intensity of tail lights and brake lights with decreasing ambient light levels. Such intensity variation may be continuous or accomplished in discrete steps. Additionally, it may be desirable to increase the intensity of the tail lights and/or brake lights when foul weather, such as rain, fog, or snow, is detected.

USER CONTROL AND FEEDBACK

An alternative embodiment of the present invention is shown in Fig. 34. The same reference numerals are used to illustrate common elements as in the embodiment shown in Fig. 11. Like the embodiment shown in Fig. 11, this alternative embodiment shown in Fig. 34 includes an image sensor chip 201 and a lens 202 preferably mounted in a mirror mount 1003. A compass sensor 1135 is also preferably mounted in mirror mount 1003. The compass sensor may alternatively be mounted in mirror body 1000. A microcontroller 1105 is preferably mounted in mirror body 1000 and is coupled to image sensor chip 201 and compass sensor 1135. Mirror body 1000 may further include an electrochromic element 1102 and a compass display 3404, both of which may be controlled by microcontroller 1105.

A forward-facing ambient light sensor 1107 and a rearward-facing glare sensor 1109 are also preferably provided in mirror body 1000. Additionally, a sky sensor 3402 may be provided in mirror housing 1000, which is inclined at an angle to view the scene of the sky above and slightly in front of the vehicle. Such a sky sensor 3402 may be used for detecting snow or other ambient light conditions. Sky sensor 3402 may be a single pixel sensor or may optionally be incorporated in the mirror mount as an optical element that images a view of the sky onto a designated area of the image sensor chip. Such a structure is disclosed in commonly assigned U.S. Patent No. 6,130,421.

Microcontroller 1105 is coupled to the vehicle bus 3406 for exchange of various information and control signals. As indicated, a switch control module 3408 may be coupled to the bus for providing the states of various switches that may be manipulated by the user to microcontroller 1105. For example, a high/low beam switch 3410 may be coupled to switch control module 3408, as may be a headlamp on/off switch 3412. Such switches are common in vehicles with the high/low beam switch typically being mounted

to the steering wheel column and the headlamp on/off switch being positioned on the vehicle instrument panel.

The present invention also provides for a user sensitivity selection switch 3414 that is coupled to switch control module 3408 to allow a user to adjust the sensitivity of the headlamp control system. Microcontroller 1105 may respond to changes in the sensitivity setting set by the user by adjusting the thresholds that the microcontroller utilizes to compare to detected light sources to determine when to turn off or on or fade in or out the high beams. Alternatively, microcontroller 1105 may utilize the sensitivity setting to change the rate at which it changes headlamp brightness states or may change the duty cycles associated with those states. Further still, microcontroller 1105 may adjust the sensitivity by changing the integration time of some or all of the pixels in the CMOS image array sensor. Also, the sensitivity to light in various portions of the scene in front of the vehicle may be adjusted by varying the thresholds/integration times for pixels in the image array sensor that image the peripheral regions of the forward scene. Other adjustments may also be programmed into microcontroller 1105 to determine how it should respond to adjustment of a user-sensitivity switch 3414.

As will be explained further below, the present invention also provides for the inclusion of an automatic headlamp control on/off switch 3415 by which a user may disable the automatic control of the vehicle headlamps.

Also coupled to vehicle bus 3406 is a lighting control module (or body controller) 3416, which controls the state and possibly the perceived brightness of the low beam headlamps 3418, the high beam headlamps 3420, and the brightness of the tail lights 3422. Front control module 3416 may also be used to control the on/off status or perceived brightness of fog lamps. As mentioned above, the brightness of daytime running lights may be adjusted by controlling the perceived brightness of high beams 3420.

Fig. 35 shows a state diagram for operation of microcontroller 1105 in response to various states of the switches coupled to switch control module 3408. As illustrated, the microcontroller 1105 may operate in an automatic mode or a manual mode in response to the activation of the automatic control on/off switch 3415. Such a switch may be provided on the steering wheel column and integrated into the same column switch that is utilized to manually activate the high beams. For example, if such a column switch is in a middle position, microcontroller 1105 will operate in a manual mode. If, for example, this column switch is moved to a forward position, microcontroller 1105 will respond by entering an automatic control mode. As discussed above, during an automatic control

mode, microcontroller 1105 varies the headlamp state between a high beam on state 3502 and a high beam off state 3504 based upon the light sources detected by the image sensor or upon other events. In the manual mode, however, the headlamps are operated manually in a conventional manner. For example, the high beams may initially be in an off state 3508 and be turned on by manual toggling of the column switch or other mechanism such that the high beams are in an on state (3510). Toggling a switch back would turn the high beams off. If the column switch includes a flash-to-pass feature, flashing the column switch would temporarily turn the high beams (on state 3512) whereas when the user releases the column switch, the high beams are turned off and returned to state 3508.

Fig. 36 shows a state diagram showing a more complex control scheme. As with the control scheme shown in Fig. 35, microcontroller 1105 may operate in either an automatic mode or a manual mode. Transition between the automatic or manual modes is generally manually selected using a switch 3415 that may, for example, be provided on the steering wheel column or on the vehicle instrument panel. In the manual mode, microcontroller 1105 operates in the same manner as described above with respect to Fig. 35. In the automatic mode, however, microcontroller 1105 initially operates in an automatic high beam control state 3602 whereby the high beams are automatically controlled to transition between on and off states, as well as states of intermediate brightness if the headlamps are capable of this feature. When operating in the automatic mode in accordance with the scheme shown in Fig. 36, when a user toggles the column switch 3410 for manually turning on the high beams, microcontroller 1105 turns on the high beams in a manual override state 3604 until such time that the user again toggles the column switch, at which point microcontroller 1105 returns to the automatic high beam control state 3602. In the event that the user manually activates the flash-to-pass column switch, microcontroller 1105 enters the high beam on flash-to-pass state 3606 and remains in this state so long as the flash column switch remains in the flash-to-pass position. Once the user releases the flash-to-pass column switch, microcontroller 1105 returns to the automatic high beam control state 3602.

While the high beams may be activated in their brightest state during the flash-to-pass state, it will be appreciated that, according to one embodiment of the present invention, the brightness of the headlamps during a flash-to-pass state may be less than full brightness. Specifically, the brightness of the headlamps during a flash-to-pass state may be varied as a function of the sensed ambient light level and also as a function of the current brightness level of the headlamps. In this manner, any time the flash-to-pass

switch is actuated, the perceived brightness of the headlamps will be increased by a predetermined increment above that of their current brightness level so as to provide a perceivable increase in the brightness of the headlamps to any preceding vehicles, but without causing a sudden and excessive glare in the eyes of the drivers of such vehicles.

Fig. 37 shows yet another state diagram for a more complex control scheme. Again, microcontroller 1105 operates in either an automatic or a manual mode. When in the manual mode, microcontroller 1105 allows the headlamps to be controlled in the same manner as discussed above with respect to Figs. 35 and 36. Again, operation in either the automatic or the manual mode may be manually selected by the user by manipulation of a switch 3415.

When in the automatic mode, microcontroller 1105 operates in an automatic high beam control state whereby the control state varies between a high beam on state 3702 and a high beam off state 3704. Microcontroller 1105 moves between states 3702 and 3704 in the manner discussed above responsive to the light sources detected by the image sensor. When microcontroller 1105 is operating in an automatic mode with the high beams on (state 3702) and then the column switch 3410 is toggled, microcontroller 1105 will interpret the toggling of the column switch as a request to turn the high beams off. Microcontroller 1105 thus enters a high beam off manual override state 3708. Microcontroller 1105 will maintain the high beams in their off manual override state 3708 for a predetermined time period, such as 30 seconds or until the column switch is again toggled. When the time period expires, microcontroller 1105 will initially maintain their high beams in the off state, but will move to state 3704 whereby the high beams may be automatically turned back on based upon the automatic headlamp control algorithm that is responsive to the light sources detected by the image sensor. If microcontroller 1105 is in the high beam off manual override state 3708 and the column switch is again toggled, microcontroller 1105 will interpret this action as a request by the user to move to a high beam on manual override state 3706. Microcontroller 1105 will maintain this manual override high beam on state 3706 for a predetermined time period, such as 15 seconds, or until the column switch is again toggled. If the column switch is again toggled, microcontroller 1105 will move to the high beam off manual override state 3708. Microcontroller 1105 will leave state 3076 and will enter state 3702 when the timer expires so as to initially maintain the high beams in their on status but allow for the automatic control algorithm to dim or turn off the headlamps in response to light sources detected by the image sensor.

If microcontroller 1105 is operating in the automatic control state with the high beams off (state 3704) and the column switch is toggled, microcontroller 1105 will interpret this as a command to enter the high beam on override state 3706. Microcontroller 1105 will then leave the high beam on manual override state 3706 based on the criteria discussed above.

If microcontroller 1105 is operating in the automatic control state with the high beams off (state 3704) and the user manually activates the flash-to-pass column switch, microcontroller 1105 will move to state 3710 by which the high beams are turned on in a flash-to-pass state. The high beams will remain on so long as the user holds the column switch in the flash-to-pass position. Once the user releases the flash-to-pass column switch, microcontroller 1105 will return to the automatic mode with the high beams off (state 3704). If the microcontroller is in the automatic control states with the high beams already on (state 3702), at such time that the user activates the flash-to-pass column switch, the high beams will remain on in state 3710 so long as the user holds the column switch in the flash-to-pass position. However, once the user releases the column switch, microcontroller 1105 returns to state 3704 rather than state 3702 so as to turn the high beams off. If conditions warrant, headlamp controller 1105 will turn the high beams back on under automatic control.

Other features that may be implemented would allow the automatic headlamp controller to gradually fade the brightness of the headlamps at such time that the headlamp switch 3412 is turned to an off position or if the vehicle ignition is turned off. Alternatively, the headlamp controller may fade the headlamps a designated time after it is detected that all occupants (or just the driver) have exited the vehicle. Such fading provides the benefits of illuminating the area in which the vehicle occupants will exit the vehicle. By fading the lights in this manner, rather than leaving the lights on in their full brightness states for a fixed time period, it is less likely an observer would suggest to the driver or other occupants that they had left their vehicle lights on since that observer would be able to see the fading of the headlamps during such time period.

Referring back to Fig. 34, an instrument control panel module 3424 may be coupled to vehicle bus 3402. An indicator 3426 may be coupled to instrument panel control module 3424 so as to receive control signals from microcontroller 1105 over vehicle bus 3406. Typically, vehicles have had a single indicator, often a blue light, which is activated when the vehicle's high beams are in an on state. Such single indicator, however, does not provide a user with any feedback as to the relative brightness of the

high beams when they are controlled automatically by a headlamp controller to have various intermediate brightness levels. To provide such feedback, the system may be configured such that indicator 3426 has a brightness that varies in proportion to the brightness level of the headlamps. Such variance may be along a continuum or may change in noticeable incremental steps. The brightness of indicator 3426 may also be doubled or increased significantly when the headlamps are in a high beam state as a result of manual activation of the high beams so as to provide the user with a clear indication that the system has appropriately responded to such manual activation. Another alternative indication scheme is to have the indicator change color as a function of the brightness of the headlamps. Yet another indication scheme is to configure indicator 3426 to include a scale that indicates a relative brightness of the headlamps. Such a scale may be provided as a multi-segmented display, such as the exemplary display shown in Fig. 38 in which the number of segments that are illuminated correspond to the relative brightness of the headlamps. Thus, for example, headlamp icon segment 3802 may be illuminated at all times that the headlamps are on and the various segments 3804-3812 are independently activated with the increasing brightness level of the headlamps. In addition, the color of the indicator shown in Fig. 38 may change to indicate manual activation or operation in either the manual or automatic modes or to indicate operation of the low beams, DRLs, fog lamps, etc. Another way to indicate to the driver that the headlamp controller is operating in an automatic control mode is to provide an indicator light in the auto/manual select switch 3415 such that when the user depresses the auto/manual select switch 3415, a light within or near by the switch is activated. Other indication techniques known in the art may similarly be utilized.

As discussed above, the vehicle headlamps may be operated in a super-high beam state in accordance with the laws of the various countries in which the vehicle may be used. Such super-high beams have been proposed to have an intensity of greater than 75,000 cd at 0° vertical and horizontal. Such super-high beams have been approved for use in Europe and found to be beneficial. In the event the vehicle is equipped with this capability and the appropriate headlamps, the control circuit may control the super-high beams to be activated when it detects that the vehicle is above a predetermined speed level. In this manner, the super-high beams can most typically only be activated when the vehicle is operated on an expressway.

Additionally, if such super-high beams are provided, the system may be programmed to have increased sensitivity to light sources detected forward of the vehicle. The super-high beams may also be faded as light sources are detected as coming closer to the vehicle.

As shown in Fig. 34, microcontroller 1105 may be coupled to a GPS receiver 3450 via vehicle bus 3406. Microcontroller 1105 may receive information from GPS receiver 3450 that is indicative of the location and possibly the direction of travel of the vehicle. GPS receiver 3450 may be part of a navigation system or may be part of any other system in the vehicle. The GPS receiver and antenna may be mounted to the rearview mirror assembly as disclosed in commonly assigned U.S. Patent No. 6,166,698.

The information received from GPS receiver 3450 may be in a form that already identifies the location and direction of the vehicle or it may be in the form of information received directly from the satellites from which the location would need to be computed by microcontroller 1105. If GPS receiver 3450 is part of a navigation system, the navigation system may process the information from the GPS receiver and provide exactly the information needed by microcontroller 1105. Such information may include, for example, an indication whether or not the road that the vehicle is currently traveling on is a residential road, a divided highway, or an expressway. Microcontroller 1105 may then utilize this information to control the exterior lights on the vehicle. Specifically, microcontroller 1105 may prevent actuation of the vehicle high beams or the super-high beams when the vehicle is traveling on a residential road. Microcontroller 1105 may also disable the super-high beams except when the vehicle is traveling on a divided highway or expressway. The location of the vehicle may also be utilized to automatically enable or disable the super-high beams based upon a determination of whether the vehicle is located in a country, state, or municipality that permits (or prohibits) the use of such super-high beams. Additionally, the location of the vehicle may be used to determine whether the vehicle is presently driving in a region where vehicles are driven on the left hand side of the road or in a region where vehicles are driven on the right hand side of the road.

LED HEADLAMPS FOR HEADLAMP STEERING AND HEADLAMP FLASHING

It has long been considered to be desirable to provide headlamps that can be steered in the direction that the vehicle is turning. It is also desirable to provide forward lighting that can be turned OFF, or substantially attenuated, for such a short period of time that the driver does not notice that the lights are OFF. In this way, reflections do not exist

during image acquisition. Although a light emitting diode (LED) lamp can be used to provide these features in a cost-effective manner, LED lamps producing enough light to implement a vehicle headlamp are not commercially available. LEDs suffer from a number of disadvantages that limit their application in vehicle headlamps, not the least of which are the relatively small amounts of light produced by LEDs and manufacturability limitations when incorporating LEDS having exotic constructions. Because of these disadvantages, LED lamps have not been used to implement a vehicle headlamp despite the fact that LEDs are more rugged, more energy efficient, and significantly longer lasting than other light technologies. Additionally, means of producing white light from LEDS have only recently become practical as discussed in U.S. Patent No. 5,803,579, entitled ILLUMINATOR ASSEMBLY INCORPORATING LIGHT EMITTING DIODES, issued to John K. Roberts et al. on September 8, 1998.

An LED headlamp 2600 is disclosed in Figs. 26a and 26b. The LED headlamp can be used to very briefly flash OFF, or dim, the headlamps during an image-sampling interval. The LED headlamp 2600 includes a heat extraction member 2601 that serves as a support for mounting semiconductor optical radiation emitters 2603, 2605. Where the semiconductor optical radiation emitters 2603, 2605 are electrically connected to the heat extraction member, the heat extraction member provides an electrical connection to the semiconductor optical radiation emitters in addition to providing a thermal path for removing heat generated within the semiconductor optical radiation emitters during operation. It is envisioned that the emitters 2603, 2605 can be electrically isolated from the heat extraction member such that the heat extraction member only provides a thermal path. Each of the emitters 2603 is connected to electrical conductor strip 2607 through a wire bond 2609 and a resistor 2611. Each of the emitters 2605 is connected to electrical conductor strip 2613 through a bonding wire 2615 and a resistor 2617.

The heat extraction member 2601 may be constructed of any suitable material, and may be formed in any desired configuration. The front face of the illustrated heat extraction member is generally rectangular in shape, including 33 wells, each of which receives semiconductor optical radiation emitters 2603, 2605. The back of the heat extraction member includes fins 2621 that provide a large surface for thermal dissipation to the ambient air. It is envisioned that the heat extraction member may alternatively have other configurations which enable light steering, such as being generally convex, shaped like a portion of a cylinder side wall, an elongate bar to extend across the front of the vehicle, or a plurality of joined planar surfaces extending at different angles, or the like.

The heat extraction member can be chamfered, or otherwise contain extensions, slots, holes, grooves and the like, and may incorporate depressions such as collimating cup or other form to enhance optical performance. The illustrated heat extraction member includes elliptical cups 2602. The heat extraction member may be composed of copper, copper alloys such as beryllium, aluminum, aluminum alloys, steel, or other metal, or alternatively of another high thermal conductivity material such as ceramic. Preferably, the heat extraction member is constructed from an electrically and thermally conductive metal. Such materials are commercially available from a wide variety of sources.

The cups 2602 are formed in the top surface of the heat extraction member for receipt of the semiconductor optical radiation emitters. The illustrated cups 2602 are elliptical to accommodate two emitter chips 2603, 2605 side-by-side. However, the cups may be of any suitable shape such as round, elliptical, rectangular, square, pentagonal, octagonal, hexagonal, or the like. The elliptical cups have the advantage of accommodating more than one emitter while providing an efficient reflector for projecting light outwardly in a desired radiation pattern. It is envisioned that the region of the heat extraction member directly underlying the point of attachment of the semiconductor optical radiation emitter may be coated with nickel, palladium, gold, silver or other material including alloys, in order to enhance the quality and reliability of the die attach. Other thin-layered materials may be optionally inserted between the emitter and the heat extraction member to achieve a variety of desired effects without departing from the scope and spirit of the present invention. The material preferably provides an electrical connection between the emitters and the heat extraction member whereby the heat extraction member can provide a reference potential, which may for example be ground potential. The materials are preferably adhesive, electrically insulative, and either conductive or patterned composite of electrically insulative and conductive materials, and without significantly impeding thermal transfer, may be used to support, bond, electrically connect or otherwise mount to the emitter to the heat extraction member. The region of the heat extraction member within optical-enhancement cup feature may be coated with silver, aluminum, gold or other suitable material to increase reflectance and improve the optical efficiency of the device. The area outside of the encapsulant may be coated with nichrome, black oxide or other high emissivity treatment to improve radiative cooling.

The connection of the semiconductor optical radiation emitter is preferably by the use of a special type of electrically conductive adhesive die-attach epoxy. These adhesives normally achieve good electrical conductivity by inclusion metallic fillers such

as silver in the adhesive. Suitable die-attach adhesives are well known in the art and may be obtained from Quantum Materials of San Diego, California, from Ablestik division of National Starch and Chemical, and EpoTek of Billerica, Massachusetts. Alternatively, solder may be used as a means of attaching the LED chip to the heat extraction member in some embodiments. Whether attached by electrically conductive adhesive or solder, the bond establishes good electrical and thermal conductivity between the emitter and the heat extraction member. In the case where the emitters having electrodes manifest as conductive bond pads at the top of the LED chips rather than at their base, the electrical attachment of all of the electrodes is by wire bond rather than by die attach to the heat extraction member.

The semiconductor optical radiation emitters comprise any component or material that emits electromagnetic radiation having a wavelength between 100 nm and 2000 nm by the physical mechanism of electroluminescence, upon passage of electrical current through the material or component. For purposes of generating headlamp illumination, different emitters can be used in the wells to generate the light, such as: all amber emitters the wells; or amber and cyan emitters positioned in each of the wells; or red-orange and cyan emitters placed in each of the wells; or cyan and amber emitters placed in some of the wells and red-orange and cyan emitters in other wells; phosphorous emitters in each of the wells; or the like. It is envisioned that four out of the five wells can have blue-green and amber emitters and one in five wells can have red-orange and amber emitters. Such an arrangement will produce a white light for illuminating the path of the vehicle.

The semiconductor optical emitter may comprise a light emitting diode (LED) chip or die as are well known in the art, light emitting polymers (LEPs), polymer light emitting diodes (PLEDs), organic light emitting diodes (OLEDs) or the like. Such materials and optoelectronic structures made from them are electrically similar to traditional inorganic materials known to those skilled in the art, and are available form a variety of different sources. Semiconductor optical radiation emitter, or emitter, as used herein refers to each of these and their equivalents. Examples of emitters suitable for headlamps include AlGaAs, AlInGaP, GaAs, GaP, InGaN, SiC, and may include emissions enhanced via the physical mechanism of fluorescence by the use of organic or inorganic dies or phosphors. LED chips suitable for use in the present invention are made by companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Nichia Chemical, Siemans Optoelectronics, Sharp, Stanley, Toshibe, Lite-On, Cree Research, Toyoda Gosei, Showa Denko, Tyntec, and others. Such chips are typically fashioned approximately in square base between 0.008" and 0.016" long on each

side, a height of about 0.008" to 0.020". To implement the headlamp, a larger chip having a square base larger than 0.020" may be used, and in particular it is advantageous to have a size greater that 0.025" to 0.035" to generate light. An array of such emitters mounted to a substantial heat sink permits an LED lamp to generate sufficient light to operate as a vehicle headlamp. Details of an emitter that can be used can be found in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/426,795, filed on October 22, 1999, entitled SEMICONDUCTOR RADIATION EMITTER PACKAGE, by John K. Roberts et al. An electrical path for supplying control signals to the emitters is provided through conductors. The conductors are electrical strips applied to a surface of an insulative layer. The insulative layer being mounted to the top surface of the heat sink. The insulative layer may be a circuit board including openings over the cups, or it may comprise an epoxy or plastic layer. The conductor may be any suitable electrically conductive material such as copper, aluminum, an alloy, or the like, and may advantageously comprise circuit traces applied to the insulating material by conventional means. The circuit traces disclosed in Fig. 26a illustrate a pattern that may be used where separate supply is provided for the different emitters.

An encapsulant is a material or combination of materials that serves primarily to cover and protect the semiconductor optical radiation emitter and wire bonds. The encapsulant is transparent to wavelengths of radiation. For purposes of the present invention, a substantially transparent encapsulant refers to a material that, in a flat thickness of 0.5 mm, exhibits greater than 20 % total transmittance of light at any wavelength in the visible light range between 380nm and 800nm. The encapsulant material typically includes a clear epoxy or other thermoset material, silicone or acrylate. Alternatively, the encapsulant may conceivably include glass or thermoplastic such as acrylic, polycarbonate, COC or the like. The encapsulant may include materials that are solid, liquid or gel at room temperature. The encapsulant may include transfer molding compounds such as NT 300H, available form Nitto Denko, or potting, encapsulation or other materials which start as a single part or multiple parts and are processed with a high temperature cure, two part cure, ultra-violet cure, microwave cure, or the like. Suitable clear encapsulants may be obtained from Epoxy Technology of Billerica, Massachusetts, from Nitto Denko America, Inc., of Fremont, California, or from Dexter Electronic Materials of Industry, California.

The encapsulant may provide partial optical collimation or other beam formation of electromagnetic energy emitted by the emitter and or reflected by the surface of heat

extraction member. The encapsulant also serves as a chemical barrier, sealant, and physical shroud providing protection of emitters, internal adhesives such as bonds, bond pads, conductor wires, wire bonds and internal surfaces of heat extraction member and electrical leads from environmental damage due to oxygen exposure, exposure to humidity or other corrosive vapors, solvent exposure, mechanical abrasion or trauma, and the like. Encapsulant provides electrical insulation. Encapsulant may also provide for attaching or registering to adjacent components such as secondary optics, support members, secondary heat extractors, and the like.

The encapsulant may comprise a heterogeneous mass of more than one material, wherein each material occupies a portion of the overall encapsulant volume and provides a specialized function or property. For example, a stress relieving gel such as a silicone "glob top" may be placed over the emitter and wire bonds. Such a localized stress relieving gel remains soft and deformable and may serve to cushion the emitter and wire bonds from stress incurred during subsequent processing of the component or due to thermal expansion to shock. A hard molding compound such as an epoxy, may then be formed over the stress relieving gel to provide structural integration for the various features of the component, to retain the electrical leads, to protect the internal mechanisms of the component from environmental influences, to electrically insulate the semiconductor radiation emitters, to provide various optical moderation of radiant energy emitted by the emitter if desired.

Additionally, the filler used within the stress relieving gel may advantageously include a high thermal conductivity material such as diamond powder. Diamond is a chemically inert substance with an extremely high thermal conductivity. The presence of such a material may significantly increase the thermal conductivity of the gel and provide an additional path for heat generated in the emitter chip to reach the heat extraction member and ambient environment where it can be dissipated. Such additional heat extraction path will increase the efficiency of the emitter, and thus the light output of the lamp. The encapsulant, and manufacture of a device using such an encapsulant is described in greater detail in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/426,795.

A steerable light emitting diode headlamp 2700 is illustrated in Fig. 27. The headlamp includes a heat extraction member 2701 having two lamp sections 2703 and 2705. The heat extraction member 2701 is configured to include the two lamp sections

2703 and 2705 each of which is substantially identical to lamp 2601, presenting two front faces at an angle of 5° to 45°, and may advantageously be angled at approximately 15°.

Another alternative design for a headlamp for providing low and high beams is illustrated in Fig. 28. The headlamp 2800 includes a heat extraction member 2801 having two lamp sections 2803 and 2805. The heat extraction member 2801 is configured to include the two lamp sections 2803 and 2805, each of which is substantially identical to lamp 2601. The heat extraction member provides two front faces at an angle of 1° to 2°, and may advantageously be angled at approximately 1.5°. The angle is exaggerated in Fig. 28 so that the angled surfaces are readily visible.

By controlling the selection of the LEDs that are illuminated, the headlamps can be aimed. It is also envisioned that the front of the car can have LED chips positioned in a bar running across the front grill.

Whereas the above embodiment takes advantage of directly mounting a number of chips on a common heat sink, it is also envisioned that an array of discrete LED lamps can be used to implement an LED headlamp 2650 (Figs. 26c and 26d). Each discrete LED lamp preferably includes a heat extraction member for dissipating power generated by the emitters to obtain a brighter light level without damaging the LED components. A particularly advantageous high power LED lamp which is uniquely adapted for conventional manufacturing processes is disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/426,795, entitled SEMICONDUCTOR RADIATION EMITTER PACKAGE, filed on October 22, 1999, by John K. Roberts et al. Other LED lamps that could be used are commercially available from LED manufacturers such as Hewlett Packard Company.

The LED lamps 2650 (only some of which are numbered) are mounted to a circuit board 2652 and heat sink 2654 (Fig. 26d). The circuit board can provide a secondary heat sink, where the conductive layer 2660 of the circuit board exposed to ambient air, by thermally coupling the heat extraction member 2664 of each LED lamp to the conductive layer 2662 of the circuit board. The heat extraction member of the LED lamp is also thermally coupled to the heat sink 2654. In the illustrated embodiment of Figs. 26c and 26d, the thermally conductive material 2670 is positioned in a hole through the circuit board below the heat extraction member. The thermally conductive material is thicker than the circuit board, and resilient. For example, the thermally conductive material can be provided using a preformed thermal coupler such as a silicon based, cut resistant material commercially available from Bergquist, and identified as Silipad 600. Packages

for LED lamps using the heat extraction member are disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/425,792, entitled INDICATORS AND ILLUMINATORS USING A SEMICONDUCTOR RADIATION EMITTER, filed on October 22, 1999, by John K. Roberts et al.

Where red-green-blue or binary complementary lighting is used, it is envisioned that only selected chips will be flashed OFF when attempting to distinguish reflective objects from lamps. Thus, for binary complementary emitters, only amber emitters need to have a briefly reduced intensity. Additionally, it will be recognized that instead of turning the headlamps OFF, the light level can be reduced to a level at which reflections will be below the pixel threshold at which the image sensor assembly will detect an object.

Other LED device/component structures that may be employed are disclosed in commonly assigned U.S. Provisional Application No. _____ (Attorney Docket No. GEN10 PP375), entitled HIGH POWER RADIATION EMITTER DEVICE AND HEAT DISSIPATING PACKAGE FOR ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS, filed on February 1, 2001, by John K. Roberts et al. and in commonly assigned U.S. Provisional Application No. _____ (Attorney Docket No. GEN10 PP391), entitled RADIATION EMITTER DEVICES AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME, filed on January 22, 2001, by John K. Roberts et al.

SURFACE MOUNTED FILTER FOR SENSOR

A method by which a filter can be directly deposited onto a semiconductor light sensor 201 will now be described with respect to Figs. 29a through 29d. In the first step, a photoresist 2877 is deposited over the entire wafer 2972. The photoresist may be any suitable commercially available photoresist material. Portions of the photoresist may be removed such that the remaining photoresist 2877 is patterned to cover only those areas on the surface of the wafer requiring protection from the optical coating deposition, such as the bonding pad 2975, as shown in Fig. 29b. The optical film coating 2979 is then applied to the surface of the die 2972 as shown in Fig. 29c.

The thin film 2979 is deposited directly on the light sensor 2932 in multiple layers. The red and cyan filters, if red and cyan filters are desired, will be applied separately. An example of a cyan filter will be now be described. To make a cyan filter, the layers of titanium dioxide (TiO_2) and silicon dioxide (SiO_2) described in Table 1 can be used. To make a red filter, the layers described in Table 2 can be used. The layer number is the

order in which the material is applied to the wafer surface.

Table 1

Layer	Material	Thickness(nm)
1	SiO_2	170
2	TiO_2	124
3	SiO_2	10
4	TiO_2	134
5	SiO_2	160
6	TiO_2	79
7	SiO_2	164
8	TiO_2	29
9	SiO_2	168
10	TiO_2	68
11	SiO_2	164
12	TiO_2	33
13	SiO_2	163
14	TiO_2	69
15	SiO_2	154
16	TiO_2	188
17	SiO_2	148
18	TiO_2	88
19	SiO_2	319

Table 2

Layer	Material	Thickness(nm)
1	TiO_2	68
2	SiO_2	64
3	TiO_2	35
4	SiO_2	138
5	TiO_2	57
6	SiO_2	86
7	TiO_2	50
8	SiO_2	78
9	TiO_2	73
10	SiO_2	94
11	TiO_2	54
12	SiO_2	89
13	TiO_2	52
14	SiO_2	87
15	TiO_2	50
16	SiO_2	74
17	TiO_2	28
18	SiO_2	61
19	TiO_2	49
20	SiO_2	83
21	TiO_2	48
22	SiO_2	78
23	TiO_2	48
24	SiO_2	91

After all of the layers are deposited, the photoresist is lifted off using a conventional lift off process, leaving the film deposited over the light sensitive region, but not over the bonding pads, as shown in Fig. 29d. The resulting die can be encapsulated to provide the image array sensor in conventional packaging.

The characteristics of the filters produced according to Table 1 and Table 2 are illustrated in Figs. 30 and 31. In particular, the red filter will attenuate light below 625 nm whereas the blue filter will pass light between approximately 400nm and 625 nm. Both filters will pass light above 800 nm. An infrared filter can be utilized to reduce the effect of infrared light on the performance of the headlamp dimmer.

Those skilled in the art will recognize that the filters described herein are exemplary, and that other filters, materials, or material thickness could be used to implement the filter function. Other materials could be applied in a similar manner to provide these or other filter characteristics.

Those skilled in the art will also recognize that the layer thicknesses are rounded to the nearest nanometer. Although there will be some tolerance permitted, good precision in the stack construction is required. It will also be recognized that the layer thicknesses are exemplary. By surface mounting the filters, the cost of providing the image sensor can be greatly reduced, as components and manufacturing complexity are reduced. Additionally, an infrared filter can be applied as a coating between the pixels and the red and blue filters.

PACKAGE

An alternate optical sensor assembly 3200 is disclosed in Fig. 32. Optical sensor assembly 3200 includes a base substrate 3202, which is transparent. The substrate may be manufactured of any suitable material such as a transparent polymer, glass, or the like. Alternately, it is envisioned that the base substrate may be manufactured of a commercially available infrared interference filter such as those described hereinabove. Alternatively, a thin film filter may be attached to a transparent glass element to make the base substrate 3202.

The lower surface of the base substrate has conductive strips 3210 for connection to the image array sensor 3212. The base substrate is preferably an electrical insulator, whereby the strips can be any suitable electrically conductive material applied directly to the lower surface of the base substrate by conventional manufacturing processes. Alternatively, if the base substrate is an electrical conductor, the strips can be applied to an electrical insulator, which is in turn applied to the base substrate.

The image array sensor 3212 is flip chip bonded to the lower surface of the base substrate 3202 by soldering pads 3211. A dielectric material 3214, such as an epoxy, encloses the image array sensor. The dielectric material preferably bonds with the conductive strips 3210 and the transparent element 3202. Clips 3204 and 3206 clip onto the edges of the base substrate and make electrical contact with respective conductive strips 3210. A respective clip can be provided for each of the conductive strips 3210. Leads 3213, 3215 extend from the clips for insertion into support substrate 3201, which can be a printed circuit board, a housing, or the like. The support substrate is preferably a printed circuit board carried in a housing, such as a rearview mirror mount housing. The stops 3205, 3207 limit the length of the leads that can be inserted into the support substrate. Alternatively, the clips can be configured for surface mounting. Examples of surface mountable clips include NAS Interplex Edge Clips, from NAS Interplex, an Interplex Industries Company located in Flushing, New York, USA.

Packages for mounting the image array sensor are described in U.S. Patent No. 6,130,448, OPTICAL SENSOR PACKAGE AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME, filed on August 21, 1998, by Fred Bauer et al.

The assembly of the lens to the base substrate can be provided in the same manner as described hereinabove. In particular, the lens structure is carried on the base substrate 3202. The lens structure can be identical to the lens structure 202, and thus can be half clear and half red, or half cyan and half red, or entirely clear where a color filter is applied directly to the surface of the image sensor as described above with respect to Figs. 29a-29d. To make the lens assembly, a transparent member and a UV curable adhesive can be used. The transparent member can be an epoxy member like members 230, 802. The UV curable adhesive can be identical to adhesive 232.

RADAR

A wave transceiver 101 (Fig. 1) can be used to acquire additional intelligence usable for controlling the operation of the controlled vehicle 100. The wave transceiver can be used without the image array sensor 102, or it can be used with the image array sensor. The wave transceiver device 101 is mounted on a vehicle 100 and oriented in a generally forward direction. The wave transceiver device 101 is positioned to receive the reflections of waves emitted by the transceiver device after they have reflected off objects in front of the vehicle 100. The wave-emitting device may be a radar system operating, for example, in a frequency range exceeding 1 GHz (77 GHz is designated for vehicular radar in many European countries) or an optical radar utilizing, for example, laser diodes for the wave-emitting device. Alternatively, the wave-emitting device 101 may be an ultrasonic transducer emitting ultrasonic waves. The wave-emitting device may be scanned across the forward field to cover various angles. For the purposes of this invention, the term "radar" will be used to encompass all of these concepts. The wave transceiver should not be interpreted as being limited to any specific type or configuration of wave transmitting or wave receiving device. The transmitter and receiver may each be mounted within a different respective housing or they both may be mounted in a common housing.

A radar processing system 3300 (Fig. 33) controls the wave transmitting section 3301, 3302 and interprets the signal received by the wave receiving section 3304, 3305 to determine the presence of objects as well as the speed and direction of such objects. A headlamp controller 3303 receives target information from the radar processing system, and may optionally also receive signals from the vehicle speed sensor (such as a

speedometer) and a vehicle direction sensor (such as a compass) and generates a control signal which determines the state of the vehicle headlamps 111. The communication between the radar processing system, the vehicle speed sensor, the vehicle direction system and the vehicle headlamps may be by one of many mechanisms including direct wiring through a wiring harness or by a vehicle communication bus such as the CAN bus. Additionally, systems such as the radar processing system and the headlamp controller may be implemented by a single integrated processor, multiple processors, digital signal processors, microcontrollers, microprocessors, programmable logic units, or combinations thereof.

More particularly, the system contains a radar system that includes a wave transmitting section and a wave receiving section. The wave transceiver 101 includes an emitter 3301 and a receiver 3304. The transmitter may be implemented using an antenna for a conventional radar, a light source for optical radar, an ultrasonic emitter, an antenna system for a Doppler radar system, or the like. The receiver 3304 may be implemented using an antenna in a conventional radar system, a light receiving element in an optical radar system, an ultrasonic receiver, a wave guide antenna in a Doppler radar system, or the like. A driver 3302 is connected to the emitter 3301 to condition signals from controller 3303 so that emitter 3301 produces signals, which, when reflected, can be detected by the receiver 3304. The driver 3302 may be implemented using a pulse modulator, a pulse shaper, or the like. The receiver 3304 is connected to a conditioning circuit 3305 which conditions the signals detected by the receiver for further processing by controller 3303. The conditioning cirucit may include a demodulator, a filter, an amplifier, an analog-to-digital converter (ADC), combinations thereof, and the like. The controller 3303 may be implemented using a microprocessor, a digital signal processor, a microcontroller, a programmable logic unit, combinations thereof, or the like.

The operation of radars to determine the presence of objects relative to a vehicle are well known, and will not be described in greater detail hereinbelow. For example, the time between the transmitted wave and the detection of the reflected wave may be used to determine the distance of an object. The movement of an object over successive transmission/reception cycles may be used to determine an object's relative speed and direction. Doppler radar may also be used to determine the objects speed. The magnitude of the reflected wave may be used to determine the size or density of the detected object. Operation of radars is well known, and will not be described in greater detail herein.

In order to properly control the high beam state of the controlled vehicle 100 it is necessary to determine if an object detected by the radar is a vehicle or a stationary object and, if a vehicle, whether the vehicle is an oncoming vehicle 105 or preceding vehicle 110. This can be accomplished by comparing the speed and direction of the object with the speed and direction of the controlled vehicle 100. The speed and direction of travel of the object is obtained using the radar principles described above. The speed of the controlled vehicle 100 may be obtained from a speed sensor on the vehicle, a global positioning system (GPS) system, or the like. The direction of the control vehicle 100 may be obtained from a compass sensor, a steering wheel turn indicator, a GPS, or the like.

Once this information is obtained, a simple set of criteria is applied to determine if the object is a vehicle or a stationary object. If an object is stationary, it will be moving in a direction opposite the controlled vehicle 100 at the same speed as the controlled vehicle. If an object is an oncoming vehicle 105, it will be traveling in a direction approximately opposite the controlled vehicle 100 at a speed substantially faster than that of the controlled vehicle. Finally, if an object is not moving relative to the controlled vehicle or the object is moving at a rate substantially slower than the controlled vehicle, the object is likely a preceding vehicle 1110. The distance at which the high beams are dimmed may be a function of the speed of the controlled vehicle and may be a function of the angle between an axis straight forward of the controlled vehicle 100 and the oncoming vehicle 105 or preceding vehicle 110.

In a more advanced system the headlamp control system not only controls the high/low beam state of the headlamps 3311, 3312 and high beam lamps 3314, 3315 based on the presence of one or more vehicles, but may vary the brightness of the high beam headlamps and low beam headlamps to provide a continuous transition between the two beams as a function of the distance to the nearest other vehicle, thus maximizing the available luminance provided to the driver of the controlled vehicle without distraction to the other driver. A continuously variable headlamp system is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,049,171 entitled CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE HEADLAMP CONTROL, filed on September 18, 1998, by Joseph S. Stam et al. The system may also vary the aim of the controlled vehicle headlamps in the vertical direction. The system may be configured to transition between more than two beams or may be configured to perform a combination of aiming and varying the brightness or one or more lamps. The headlamp processing system may also use the vehicle direction input to determine the proper horizontal aim of

the headlamps to provide better illumination when traveling on curves. An LED headlamp that facilitates aiming is described above.

A light sensor 3320 can be used to detect ambient light levels and may optionally provide other light conditions. The light sensor may be implemented using a non-imaging sensor such as a silicon photodiode, a particularly advantageous photodiode disclosed in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/237,107, entitled PHOTODIODE LIGHT SENSOR, filed by Robert Nixon et al., although other non-imaging photocells could be used such as cadmium sulphide (CdS) cells, or the like. The light sensor 3320 can be alternately be implemented using an optical image sensor 102 in addition to, or instead of, a non-imaging light sensor.

The optical system may contain filters to determine the color of a light source. The combination of an optical system with a radar system may better overcome the limitations present if only one or the systems are used independently. For example, if a radar system is used independently of an imaging system, an oncoming or preceding vehicle waiting at an intersection would be perceived by the radar system as a stationary object. However, by combining an optical sensor with the radar system, the lights on the waiting vehicle would indicate that a vehicle is present and the radar can determine the actual distance to the vehicle. In general, if an optical system is used, the optical system may be used to determine the presence of oncoming or preceding vehicles and the radar system may be used to determine the actual distance to such oncoming or preceding vehicle as well as the speed of that vehicle. In this manner, the radar detector and the imaging sensor can be used to verify the presence of other objects. Additionally, the light sensors can be used to determine light conditions, such as ambient light levels.

The presence of the radar system on the vehicle may enable other features other than headlamp control to be implemented utilizing the same components as the headlamp radar, thus reducing the cost of the two systems combined. Such system may include, for example, adaptive cruise control, obstacle warning systems, collision avoidance systems, autonomous driving systems, or the like. In this case, the wave transmitting section, wave receiving section, and radar processing systems could be shared by all features while each feature has its own processing system for determining a course of action based upon the information received from the radar processing system. It is also possible to integrate the processing systems from each feature into a single processor.

A radar system is described in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/531,211, entitled AUTOMATIC HEADLAMP CONTROL SYSTEM.

MIRROR MOUNT ACCESSORY HOUSING

A preferred mounting structure for mounting the headlamp dimmer system of the present invention is shown in Figs. 41-49. As illustrated, this structure includes a mount 4101 having a slot 4103 for receiving a mounting puck (not shown) that is adhesively secured to the vehicle windshield. An aperture 4105 is formed in mount 4101 and opens into slot 4103 to allow a mount screw 4107 to extend through aperture 4105 and engage a surface of the mounting puck so as to securely hold mount 4101 on the puck and thus on the vehicle windshield. Mount 4101 includes a ball 4109 to which the socket of a mirror mounting stem (not shown) may be secured in conventional fashion. The mounting stem may be secured to a similar ball extending from the rearview mirror housing or the stem may include a ball for engaging a socket formed in the mirror housing body.

As described in more detail below, a mirror mount accessory housing 4111 is secured to mount 4101 and includes a housing cover 4113 consisting of a right half portion 4113a and a left half portion 4113b. As best shown in Fig. 44, mount 4101 includes a plurality of laterally extending pegs 4115, which are inserted in corresponding holes 4117 provided in housing cover portions 4113a and 4113b. Additionally, housing cover portions 4113a and 4113b include resilient tabs 4119, which extend through a pair of slots 4121 on mount 4101 to securely hold housing cover 4113 on mount 4101. Housing cover portions 4113a and 4113b further include a plurality of tabs 4123 and a plurality of slotted tongues 4125, which snap together to thereby hold together portions 4113a and 4113b. Housing portion 4113a includes a forward facing aperture 4127 in which a glass filter 4129 may be mounted. As explained further below, aperture 4127 and glass filter 4129 provide a window through which the inventive camera senses images.

The inventive mirror mount accessory housing structure further includes a baffle/printed circuit board (PCB) holder 4130 (also generally referred to herein as a support structure) that is adjustably mounted to mirror mount 4101 and contained within housing cover 4113. As shown in Fig. 44, baffle/PCB holder 4130 includes a pair of slots 4133 for engaging laterally extending pins 4135 on mirror mount 4101. Baffle/PCB holder 4130 further includes a pair of elongated slots 4137 through which screws 4139 are inserted. Screws 4139 extend through slots 4137 and are threadably engaged in holes 4141 provided in mount 4101. By providing slots 4137 as elongated apertures, the tilt of baffle/PCB holder 4130 may be selectively adjusted relative to mount 4101. Such tilt adjustability is desirable given the variance of the slope of vehicle windshields from one model to another. As discussed further below, the image sensor and its associated circuit

board is securely mounted to baffle/PCB holder 4130, and thus, the image sensor tilt relative to the vehicle windshield may be adjusted by adjusting the tilt of baffle/PCB holder 4130.

As illustrated in Fig. 44, baffle/PCB holder 4130 includes a baffle 4143 similar to the baffle discussed above. A forward end of baffle 4143 is positioned proximate aperture 4127 and glass filter 4129 while an image sensor 4145, which includes image chip 201, encapsulation block 230, UV cure epoxy 232, lens 202, and an aperture stop 203, as shown in Fig. 2a), extends into the opposite and rearward end of baffle 4143. Image sensor 4145 is mounted on a PCB 4147 having a connector 4149 mounted thereon. Also mounted on PCB 4147 is an image sensing die (not shown), which functions as a sky sensor in the manner discussed above. To provide light from a skyward view relative to the vehicle, a light pipe 4151 is mounted over the die on PCB 4147 within a light pipe mount 4153, which engages a corresponding light pipe support 4155 on baffle/PCB holder 4130. Light pipe 4151 includes a pair of laterally extending protrusions 4157 that engage corresponding apertures 4159 in a light pipe filler 4161, which has an aperture 4163 through which the distal end of light pipe 4151 extends. Light pipe filler 4161 is mounted within an aperture 4165 formed in an upper surface of housing cover 4113. As will be apparent to those skilled in the art, light pipe 4151 captures the skyward light in its distal end that extends through filler 4161 towards the sky, and the skyward light is then directed through light pipe 4151 to the die on PCB 4147.

As discussed above, a processor may be mounted on PCB 4147 to preprocess some of the image data obtained from image sensor 4145.

A compass PCB 4171 may optionally be mounted within the inventive housing structure 4111. Compass PCB 4171 includes a pair of compass sensors 4173, which may be magneto resistive sensors, magneto inductive sensors, flux-gate sensors, or the like. By mounting compass PCB 4171 on baffle/PCB holder 4130, the relative tilt of sensors 4173 may be adjusted relative to the vehicle horizontal to ensure accurate sensing. Compass PCB 4171 includes a connector (not shown) to which a corresponding connector 4175 may be coupled. Connector 4175 connects compass PCB 4171 to a processor (not shown) in the mirror body via cable 4177. Cable 4177 also connects the same or a different processor within mirror body to PCB 4147 via a coupler 4179 and coupler 4149. A pair of resilient prongs 4181 of a clip structure 4183 is disposed behind PCB 4147 and secures to baffle/PCB holder 4130. Baffle/PCB holder 4130 includes a lateral extension 4187, which extends around connectors 4149 and 4179 and provides a ledge upon which resilient

prongs 4181 may latch to secure the clip 4183 and PCB 4147 to baffle/PCB holder 4130 and to assist in securing the engagement of couplers 4149 and 4179.

The above-described mounting structure provides several advantageous features. Specifically, the tilt angle of the image sensor may be selectively adjusted while not requiring movement of the housing cover relative to the mirror mount. This avoids the need to have mounting screws accessible from the exterior of the housing and thus reduces the possibility of someone tampering with the adjustment subsequent to final adjustment by the manufacturer. Further, the interior components shown in Figs 46-49 may be secured to mirror mount 4101 after it has been secured to the vehicle windshield and the adjustment may then be made with the housing cover subsequently snapped into place following final adjustment.

An additional advantage is provided by the use of light pipe 4151. In the absence of light pipe 4151, an additional circuit board would need to be mounted at an angle relative to PCB 4147 to aim the die mounted on such an inclined PCB towards the sky above the vehicle.

Although the mirror mount accessory housing has been described for mounting an image sensor, sky sensor, and compass sensors, it will be appreciated that any one or combination of these components may be disposed in the housing. Further, other components may be disposed in the housing in addition to, or in place of, any or all of the above components.

While the present invention has generally be described as preferably utilizing the full capability of the exterior lights to produce a large number of potential beam patterns that may change discretely or through a continuum, it is possible to use the system to simply turn headlamps on and off, as disclosed, for example, in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/491,192, entitled VEHICLE EQUIPMENT CONTROL WITH SEMICONDUCTOR LIGHT SENSORS, filed by Jon Bechtel et al. on January 25, 2000.

While the invention has been described in detail herein in accordance with certain embodiments thereof, many modifications and changes may be effected by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of the invention. Accordingly, it is intended that the appended claims not be limited by way of details and instrumentalities describing the embodiments shown herein.

CLAIMS

The invention claimed is:

1. A control system to control exterior lights of a controlled vehicle comprising:

an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle; and

a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the exterior lights to change their beam pattern in response to objects detected in the processed scene, said control circuit disables automatic control of the exterior lights in response to activation of the vehicle windshield wipers.

2. The control system of claim 1, wherein said control circuit is coupled to receive a signal from said windshield wipers when they are activated.

3. The control system of claim 1, wherein said control circuit determines that the windshield wipers are activated upon detecting a wiper within the scene imaged by said imaging system.

4. The control system of claim 1, wherein said control circuit determines that the windshield wipers are activated upon receiving a wiper activation signal from a rain sensor provided in the vehicle.

5. The control system of claim 1, wherein said imaging system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

6. The control system of claim 1, wherein said control circuit changes the beam pattern of the exterior lights by turning on or off at least one of the exterior lights.

7. The control system of claim 1, wherein said control circuit changes the beam pattern of the exterior lights by continuously varying the brightness of at least one of the exterior lights.

8. The control system of claim 1, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps operable in at least high and low beam states, and wherein said control circuit prevents the headlamps from operation in a high beam state when the vehicle windshield wipers are activated.

9. The control system of claim 1, wherein said control circuit is responsive to the speed of the windshield wipers to disable automatic control of the exterior lights when the windshield wipers are operating above a threshold speed.

10. The control system of claim 1, wherein the exterior lights include foul weather lights and said control circuit activates the foul weather lights when the vehicle windshield wipers are activated.

11. The control system of claim 10, wherein the foul weather lights include fog lights and said control circuit activates the fog lights when the vehicle windshield wipers are activated.

12. A control system to control exterior lights of a controlled vehicle comprising:

an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle; and

a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the exterior lights to change their beam pattern in response to objects detected in the processed scene, said control circuit disables automatic control of the exterior lights when fog is detected on the windshield.

13. The control system of claim 12, wherein fog is detected to be on the windshield when the vehicle windshield defroster is operating at a speed above a threshold.

14. The control system of claim 12, wherein said imaging system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

15. The control system of claim 12, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

16. The control system of claim 12, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps operable in at least high and low beam states, and wherein said control circuit prevents the headlamps from operation in a high beam state when the vehicle windshield defroster is operating at full speed.

17. The control system of claim 12, wherein said control circuit changes the beam pattern of the exterior lights by turning on or off at least one of the exterior lights.

18. The control system of claim 12, wherein said control circuit changes the beam pattern of the exterior lights by continuously varying the brightness of at least one of the exterior lights.

19. The control system of claim 12, wherein the exterior lights include foul weather lights and said control circuit activates the foul weather lights when the vehicle windshield defroster is operating at full speed.

20. The control system of claim 19, wherein the foul weather lights include fog lights and said control circuit activates the fog lights when the vehicle windshield defroster is operating at full speed.

21. A method of detecting snowfall or fog outside a vehicle comprising the steps of:

sensing light levels forward of the vehicle and light levels above the vehicle;

comparing the relative brightness of the light levels forward and above the vehicle; and

determining that it is snowing or foggy when a ratio of the relative brightness forward of the vehicle to that above the vehicle reaches a threshold.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the relative brightness of the light levels forward and above the vehicle are compared as the brightness of the vehicle's headlamps is increased.

23. A control system to control exterior lights of a controlled vehicle comprising:

a light sensing system configured to sense light levels forward of the controlled vehicle; and

a control circuit for light levels obtained from said sensing system and for controlling the exterior lights to change their beam pattern in response to the obtained light levels, said control circuit disables automatic control of the exterior lights when snow is detected.

24. The control system of claim 23, wherein said sensing system senses light levels forward of the vehicle and above the vehicle.

25. The control system of claim 24, wherein said sensing system includes a single pixel sensor for sensing the light level above the vehicle.

26. The control system of claim 25, wherein said sensing system includes a second sensor for sensing the light level forward of the vehicle.

27. The control system of claim 26, wherein said single pixel sensor is positioned at about a 45° angle relative to said second sensor.

28. The control system of claim 24, wherein said sensing system includes a second sensor for sensing the light level forward of the vehicle.

29. The control system of claim 24, wherein said control circuit compares the relative brightness of the light forward of the vehicle with that of the light above the vehicle as the brightness of the vehicle's headlamps increases, and determines that it is snowing when the ratio of relative brightness forward of the vehicle to that above the vehicle reaches a threshold.

30. The control system of claim 23, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps operable in at least high and low beam states, said control circuit disables the headlamps from operation in a high beam state when the vehicle windshield defroster is operating at full speed.

31. The control system of claim 23, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps operable in at least high and low beam states, said control circuit disables the headlamps from operation in a high beam state when the vehicle windshield wipers are activated.

32. The control system of claim 25, wherein said single pixel sensor senses the ambient light outside of the vehicle, and said control circuit varies the brightness of daytime running lamps in response to the ambient light level sensed by said single pixel sensor.

33. The control system of claim 23, wherein the exterior lights include daytime running lights, said imaging system comprising an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside of the vehicle, and said control circuit varies the brightness of daytime running lamps in response to the ambient light level sensed by said ambient light sensor.

34. The control system of claim 23, wherein said imaging system includes an image array sensor including a plurality of pixels, and an optical system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle onto said image array sensor, said optical system including a forwardmost surface, said optical system includes a hydrophilic coating on said forwardmost surface.

35. The control system of claim 23, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps operable in at least high and low beam states, said control circuit disables the operation of the headlamps in the high beam state when it is snowing.

36. A method of controlling vehicle headlamps comprising the steps of:
detecting whether it is snowing; and
disabling the headlamps from operation in a high beam state when it is snowing.

37. A control system to control the brightness of the tail lights of a vehicle comprising:
an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside of the vehicle; and
a control circuit for varying the brightness of the tail lights in response to the ambient light level sensed by said ambient light sensor.

38. The control system of claim 37, wherein said ambient light sensor is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

39. The control system of claim 37, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

40. A headlamp control system for controlling the headlamps of a controlled vehicle, said headlamp control system comprising:

an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle;

a control circuit coupled to said imaging system for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the headlamps to vary a beam pattern of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images; and

a user input mechanism coupled to said control circuit for allowing a user to adjust a sensitivity at which said control circuit will control the headlamps in response to light sources within the images.

41. The headlamp control system of claim 40, wherein said imaging system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

42. The headlamp control system of claim 40, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

43. The headlamp control system of claim 40, wherein said imaging system includes a plurality of sensors that integrate the light levels sensed during a predetermined integration time period, said control circuit adjusts the integration time period of said sensors in response to user adjustment of the sensitivity.

44. The headlamp control system of claim 40, wherein said control circuit adjusts the brightness of the headlamps when the brightness of light sources in the obtained images exceeds a threshold, said control circuit varies said threshold in response to user adjustment of the sensitivity.

45. The headlamp control system of claim 40, wherein said control circuit continuously varies the brightness of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images, said control circuit changes a rate at which the brightness of the headlamps is varied in response to user adjustment of the sensitivity.

46. The headlamp control system of claim 40, wherein said imaging system includes an array of pixel sensors, said control circuit being more sensitive to light sources detected within a predetermined area of the image obtained by said pixel sensor array, said control circuit varies the boundaries of said predetermined area in response to user adjustment of the sensitivity.

47. A headlamp control system for controlling the headlamps of a controlled vehicle, said headlamp control system comprising:

an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle and to detect an ambient light level outside the vehicle; and

a control circuit coupled to said imaging system for determining an ambient light level outside the vehicle for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system, and for controlling the headlamps to vary a beam pattern of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images when the ambient light level is above a threshold level.

48. The headlamp control system of claim 47, wherein said imaging system includes:

an image array sensor;

an optical system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle onto said image array sensor; and

an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light level outside the vehicle.

49. The headlamp control system of claim 48, wherein said ambient light sensor is aimed generally upward towards the sky above the vehicle.

50. The headlamp control system of claim 47, wherein said imaging system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

51. The headlamp control system of claim 47, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

52. A control system to control the headlamps of a vehicle comprising:

an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside of the vehicle; and

a control circuit for varying the beam pattern of daytime running lamps in response to the ambient light level sensed by said ambient light sensor.

53. The control system of claim 52, wherein said control circuit increases the brightness of the daytime running lights in response to increasing ambient brightness.

54. The control system of claim 52, wherein said ambient light sensor is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

55. The control system of claim 52, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

56. A control system to control exterior lights of a vehicle comprising:

an image array sensor including a plurality of pixels;

an optical system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle onto said image array sensor, said optical system including a forwardmost surface; and

a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from said image array sensor and for controlling the exterior lights in response to objects detected in the processed scene,

wherein said optical system includes a hydrophilic coating on said forwardmost surface.

57. The control system of claim 56, wherein said optical system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

58. The control system of claim 52, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

59. The control system of claim 52, wherein said optical system further includes a photocatalytic coating proximate said hydrophilic coating.

60. A vehicle control system to control the brightness of continuously variable headlamps that have a brightness that varies continuously between a high beam state and a low beam state, said control system comprising:

an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle;

a control circuit for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the perceived brightness of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images; and

an indicator coupled to said control circuit and positioned inside the vehicle for indicating to the driver the relative brightness of the headlamps.

61. The vehicle control system of claim 60, wherein said indicator has a brightness that varies in proportion to the brightness of the headlamps.

62. The vehicle control system of claim 60, wherein the brightness of said indicator doubles when the headlamps are in a high beam state as a result of manual activation of the high beams.

63. The vehicle control system of claim 60, wherein said indicator changes color as a function of the brightness of the headlamps.

64. The vehicle control system of claim 60, wherein said indicator includes a scale that indicates a relative brightness of the headlamps.

65. The vehicle control system of claim 64, wherein said indicator scale is a multi-segmented display in which the number of segments that are illuminated correspond to the relative brightness of the headlamps.

66. The vehicle control system of claim 60, wherein said imaging system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

67. The vehicle control system of claim 60, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

68. The vehicle control system of claim 60 and further including a second indicator for indicating when said control circuit is automatically controlling the brightness of the vehicle headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images.

69. An imaging system for a vehicle comprising:

an image sensor having an array of pixels and at least one other component; and

an optical baffle disposed between said image sensor and a scene to be imaged for preventing light from the scene from reaching said at least one other component.

70. The imaging system of claim 69, wherein said image sensor is a CMOS sensor.

71. The imaging system of claim 69, wherein said image sensor is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

72. A control system for controlling exterior lights of a controlled vehicle, said control system comprising:

an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle;

a switching mechanism for manual input of a driver's selection of a feature affecting the control of the exterior lights; and

a control circuit coupled to said switching mechanism and said imaging system for identifying and determining the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the exterior lights to vary the beam pattern of the exterior lights as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images and as a function of the status of said switching mechanism.

73. The control system of claim 72, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps and said switching mechanism includes a switch that allows a driver to select manual or automatic control of the vehicle headlamps.

74. The control system of claim 72, wherein, in response to selection of automatic control using said switch, said control circuit enters an automatic control mode in which the headlamps are automatically controlled in response to the detection of light sources within the images.

75. The control system of claim 74, wherein, in response to selection of manual control using said switch, said control circuit enters a manual control mode in which the headlamps are manually controlled by the driver.

76. The control system of claim 72, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps, said switching mechanism includes a switch for manually activating high beams of the vehicle headlamps, and wherein said control circuit responds to activation of said switch by turning on the high beams.

77. The control system of claim 76, wherein said switch is a toggle switch and said control circuit maintains the high beams in an on state when said switch is toggled until such time that it is again toggled at which point said control circuit automatically controls the brightness of the high beams.

78. The control system of claim 76, wherein said switch is a flash-to-pass switch, wherein said control circuit responds to manual activation of said switch by activating high beam headlamps for so long a time as the flash-to-pass switch is held in its activation position.

79. The control system of claim 72, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps, said switching mechanism includes a toggle switch for manually activating and deactivating high beams of the vehicle headlamps, and wherein said control circuit responds to toggling of said switch by changing the on/off state of the high beams from the current status of the high beams.

80. The control system of claim 79, wherein, upon switching the on/off state of the high beams in response to toggling of said switch, said control circuit maintains the high beams in the changed state for a predetermined time period at which point said control

circuit enables automatic changing of the brightness of the high beams in response to the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system.

81. The control system of claim 72, wherein the exterior lights include headlamps, said switch is a flash-to-pass switch, and wherein said control circuit responds to manual activation of said switch by turning on the high beam headlamps for so long a time as the flash-to-pass switch is held in its activation position.

82. The control system of claim 81, wherein, when said flash-to-pass switch is released from its activation position, said control circuit turns off the high beam headlamps regardless of whether the high beams were on or off before such activation and thereafter enables automatic changing of the brightness of the high beams in response to the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system.

83. The control system of claim 72, wherein said imaging system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

84. The control system of claim 72, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

85. A headlamp control system for a vehicle comprising:

a control circuit coupled to the vehicle headlamps for fading the headlamps of the vehicle to an off state in response to the turning off of the vehicle ignition.

86. The headlamp control system of claim 85, wherein said control circuit begins to fade the vehicle headlamps upon detecting the exit of the driver.

87. The headlamp control system of claim 85, wherein said control circuit begins to fade the vehicle headlamps upon detecting the exit of the last occupant to leave the vehicle.

88. The headlamp control system of claim 85 and further comprising an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, wherein said control circuit is coupled to said imaging system for identifying and determining the

brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the beam pattern of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images.

89. The headlamp control system of claim 85, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

90. A control system to control exterior lights of a vehicle comprising:

an image array sensor including a plurality of pixels;

an optical system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle onto said image array sensor, said optical system including a forwardmost surface; and

a control circuit for processing the image of the scene obtained from said image array sensor and for controlling the exterior lights in response to objects detected in the processed scene,

wherein said optical system includes a photocatalytic coating on said forwardmost surface.

91. The control system of claim 90, wherein said optical system is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

92. The control system of claim 90, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

93. A control system to control the headlamps of a vehicle comprising:

a manually actuated switch mechanism for receiving input from a driver to temporarily increase the brightness of the vehicle headlamps in a flash-to-pass state;

an ambient light sensor for sensing the ambient light outside of the vehicle; and

a control circuit coupled to said ambient light sensor and said manually actuated switch mechanism for varying the beam pattern of the headlamps during a flash-to-pass state in response to the ambient light level sensed by said ambient light sensor.

94. The control system of claim 93, wherein said ambient light sensor is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

95. The control system of claim 93, wherein said control circuit is disposed in a rearview mirror assembly.

96. A control system to control the headlamps of a vehicle, the vehicle having a microwave receiver for receiving signals from satellites, said control system comprising:

a control circuit for receiving signals from the microwave receiver indicative of the location of the vehicle, said control circuit controls the headlamps to limit the perceived brightness of the headlamps from exceeding a predetermined level less than their capacity when the vehicle is traveling on a residential street.

97. The control system of claim 96 and further comprising an imaging system configured to image the scene forward of the controlled vehicle, wherein said control circuit identifies and determines the brightness of light sources in images obtained from said imaging system and for controlling the headlamps to vary the perceived brightness of the headlamps as a function of the brightness of light sources within the images.

98. An imaging device assembly for a vehicle having a windshield, said assembly comprising:

a mounting structure configured for mounting to a vehicle in a fixed position relative to the windshield;

an imaging device; and

a support structure, said imaging device carried by said support structure, said support structure being attached to said mounting structure to allow positional adjustment of said support structure and said imaging device relative to the windshield.

99. The imaging device assembly of claim 98 and further including a housing secured to said mounting structure, said support structure and said imaging device being disposed in said housing.

100. The imaging device assembly of claim 99, wherein both said housing and said support structure being attached to said mounting structure such that positional adjustment of said support structure may be performed without changing the position of said housing relative to said mounting structure.

101. The imaging device assembly of claim 98, wherein said mounting structure is a rearview mirror assembly mounting structure.

102. The imaging device assembly of claim 101, wherein said rearview mirror assembly mounting structure is configured for securing a rearview mirror assembly to a vehicle windshield.

103. A sky sensor assembly for sensing light in the sky above a vehicle, said assembly comprising:

a housing configured for mounting to the vehicle;

a light sensor disposed within said housing;

a light pipe extending from said light sensor to an aperture formed in said housing that is directed upward towards the portion of the sky from which light is to be sensed.

104. The sky sensor assembly of claim 103, wherein said housing is a component of a rearview mirror assembly.

105. The sky sensor assembly of claim 104, wherein said housing is an accessory housing mounted to a mounting structure for a rearview mirror assembly.

106. The sky sensor assembly of claim 103 and further including a circuit board that is disposed vertically within said housing, wherein said light sensor is mounted to said circuit board.

107. The sky sensor assembly of claim 106, wherein an image sensor is mounted to said circuit board for sensing images forward of the vehicle.

108. A control system for controlling exterior lights of a controlled vehicle, said control system comprising:

an image sensor to detect light sources in a scene forward of the controlled vehicle; and

a control circuit coupled to said image sensor, said control circuit being operable to distinguish vehicle light sources from non-vehicle light sources, to distinguish between headlamps and tail lights based upon the color of the light, to detect movement of detected

vehicles, and to generate a control signal to cause the exterior vehicle lights to provide a selected illumination pattern, whereby the control signal is derived as a function of both the movement of any detected vehicles and the color of the light emanating from such vehicles.

109. The control system of claim 108, wherein the control signal is further derived as a function of any one or combination of the following parameters detected with respect to a detected light source: an AC component; brightness; relative position; and relative size.

110. The control system of claim 108, wherein the control signal is further derived as a function of any one or combination of the following parameters: turn rate of the controlled vehicle; speed of the controlled vehicle; and ambient brightness.

111. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

identifying at least one group of pixels that is associated with a light source;

analyzing the associated pixels to determine if at least one condition exists; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis.

112. The method of claim 111, wherein the step of identifying a group of pixels associated with a single light source identifies a plurality of pixels meeting a pixel criteria.

113. The method of claim 112, wherein the step of identifying a group of pixels identifies a contiguous group of pixels meeting a pixel criteria.

114. The method of claim 111, wherein the step of analyzing identifies the centroid of at least one group of pixels.

115. The method of claim 111, wherein the step of analyzing determines the size of at least one group of pixels.

116. The method of claim 115, wherein the condition is whether the light source size is greater than a threshold size.

117. The method of claim 116, wherein a further condition is the average level of the pixel levels, and wherein the headlamps are not controlled responsive to a group of pixels that is greater than the threshold size if the average pixel level in that group of pixels is less than an average pixel level threshold.

118. The method of claim 111, wherein the step of analyzing includes determining the total pixel level for at least one group of pixels.

119. The method of claim 118, where the total pixel level is the sum of the gray scale values for all of the pixels in a group of pixels.

120. The method of claim 118, where the condition is that the total pixel level exceeds a threshold total pixel level.

121. The method of claim 120, further including a threshold total pixel level for the headlamps and a threshold total pixel level for tail lights.

122. The method of claim 111, wherein the step of analyzing includes determining the average pixel level for at least one group of pixels.

123. The method of claim 120, wherein the condition is a threshold average pixel level, and the controller ignores certain light sources where the average pixel level for the group of pixels is below the average pixel level.

124. The method of claim 112, wherein the step of identifying a plurality of pixels meeting a pixel criteria identifies individual pixels having levels above a pixel threshold level.

125. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

analyzing an image input with red filtering to identify objects of interest;

analyzing an image input without red filtering in those areas where objects were identified in the step of analyzing with red filtering; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the steps of analyzing.

126. The method of claim 125, further including the step of comparing pixels levels in the image generated with red filtering to pixel levels in the image generated without red filtering for each of the objects of interest.

127. The method of claim 125, wherein the step of analyzing an image input with red filtering includes identifying groups of contiguous pixels meeting a threshold criteria to identify objects.

128. The method of claim 127, wherein the step of analyzing an image input without red filtering includes searching for groups of contiguous pixels in areas corresponding to objects identified in the step of analyzing an image input without red filtering.

129. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

determining a vehicle speed criteria;

analyzing an image input from the image sensor according to the speed criteria; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the steps of analyzing.

130. The method of claim 129, wherein the speed criteria is whether the vehicle brakes are actuated.

131. The method of claim 129, wherein the speed criteria is whether the vehicle is traveling at highway speeds.

132. The method of claim 129, wherein the step of analyzing includes changing the size of the scene viewed by the image sensor as a function of the vehicle speed.

133. The method of claim 132, wherein the speed above which the scene is enlarged is higher than the speed below which the scene is decreased.

134. The method of claim 129, wherein the step of analyzing includes preventing the high beams from coming on if the vehicle speed is below a threshold level.

135. The method of claim 129, wherein the step of selectively generating a control signal comprises fading the high beams off as the vehicle decelerates to a stop.

136. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

receiving an ambient light level from an ambient light sensor;

analyzing an image input from the image sensor according to the ambient light level to selectively generate a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis, wherein daytime running lights are enabled when the ambient light level is above a first threshold, low beam headlamps are enabled when the ambient light level is below the first threshold, and the low beam headlamps and high beam headlamps are enabled when the ambient light level is below a second threshold, and wherein the high beam headlamps are controlled automatically responsive to the pixel levels from the image sensor.

137. The method of claim 136, further including controlling one or more fog lights responsive to the ambient light sensor and the image sensor.

138. The method of claim 137, wherein the step of controlling includes evaluating the pixels of the image sensor to determine if they meet a fog criteria if the ambient light level measured by the ambient light sensor is within a predetermined range.

139. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

determining the number of objects in the image;

analyzing the image input from the image sensor to determine the number of objects in the image; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the steps of analyzing, wherein high beam headlamp operation is at least partially inhibited if the number of objects determined exceeds an object threshold.

140. The method as defined in claim 139, wherein the step of analyzing the image to detect objects monitors the frequency of occurrence of objects within a predetermined period.

141. The method as defined in claim 140, wherein the predetermined period is a predetermined number of frames.

142. The method as defined in claim 140, wherein the step of selectively generating includes inhibiting operation of the high beams when the number of objects exceeds a predetermined number.

143. The method as defined in claim 139, wherein the step of selectively generating includes inhibiting operation of the high beams when the number AC light source objects exceeds a threshold.

144. The method as defined in claim 139, wherein turning ON the high beam headlamps is inhibited if the number of objects determined exceeds an object threshold.

145. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

analyzing the image input from the image sensor to determine the number of objects in the image; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the steps of analyzing, wherein the vehicle headlamps are not adjusted responsive to detection of an object unless it appears in a threshold number of frames.

146. The method of claim 145, wherein the threshold number of frames is proportional to the brightness of the objects detected.

147. The method of claim 145, wherein the brighter the object detected, the smaller will be the threshold number of frames.

148. The method of claim 145, wherein the brightness of the headlamps are gradually altered after an object is detected for the threshold number of frames.

149. The method of claim 148, wherein after an object is detected for the threshold number of frames, the high beams may be adjusted responsive to each successive frame in which the object appears.

150. The method of claim 145, wherein the headlamp brightness is increased after the image clears for the threshold number of frames.

151. The method of claim 145, wherein the headlamp brightness is dimmed after an object is detected in the image for the threshold number of frames.

152. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

analyzing the image input from the image sensor using a spatial look-up table, the spatial look-up table having different thresholds for different pixels based on their pixel location; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the steps of analyzing, wherein the vehicle headlamps are controlled responsive to those pixels from the image sensor exceeding its respective threshold.

153. The method of claim 152, further including the step of shifting the pixels associated with the values stored in the spatial look-up table as the vehicle changes direction.

154. The method of claim 153, wherein the step of shifting the pixels includes shifting the pixels responsive to operation of the vehicle steering system.

155. The method of claim 153, wherein the step of shifting the pixels includes shifting the pixels responsive to a global positioning system input.

156. The method of claim 153, wherein the step of shifting the pixels includes shifting the pixels responsive to a compass input.

157. The method of claim 151, wherein the spatial look-up table has values which render the image sensor more sensitive to one side of the car than the other side of the car.

158. The method of claim 157, wherein the image sensor is more sensitive to the side of the car on which the driver sits.

159. The method of claim 151, wherein thresholds are dynamic such that if one pixel has a light level that is above its respective threshold, and the look-up table has a higher threshold for the adjacent pixel, the adjacent pixel will be compared to the lower of threshold said one pixel.

160. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

identifying pixels associated with a light source;

analyzing the pixels; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis, wherein the system is more sensitive when high beams are ON than when the high beams are OFF.

161. The method of claim 160, wherein the sensitivity is adjusted by increasing the integration period for the image sensor when the high beams are ON.

162. The method of claim 160 wherein the sensitivity is adjusted by using different spatial look-up tables when the high beams are OFF and ON, wherein the spatial look-up table stores respective thresholds.

163. The method of claim 160, wherein the field of view of the image sensor is broader when the high beams are OFF than when the high beams are ON.

164. The method of claim 160, wherein the off-axis sensitivity is increased when the high beams are ON.

165. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

identifying pixels that are associated with an object;

analyzing the associated pixels and storing information associated with at least one detected object; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis.

166. The method of claim 165, wherein the stored information includes the brightness of at least one object detected.

167. The method of claim 166, wherein the stored information includes the location of at least one object detected.

168. The method of claim 165, wherein the stored information includes the locations and brightness of the brightest object detected.

169. The method of claim 168, wherein if the present frame is determined to be clear of light sources, and the previous frame is determined to a bright light source, and the high beams are OFF, the high beams are controlled to produce a fast return to bright.

170. The method of claim 169, wherein the control of the high beams to produce a fast return includes an expedited fade to bright.

171. The method of claim 169, wherein the control of the high beams to produce a fast return comprises turning the high beams ON without delay.

172. The method of claim 165, wherein if the present frame is determined to be clear of light sources, and the previous frame is determined to have contained vehicle tail lights, and the high beams are OFF, the high beams are controlled to produce a tail light delayed return to bright.

173. The method of claim 172, wherein the tail light delayed return to bright is longer than a return to bright following detection of headlamps from an oncoming vehicle.

174. The method of claim 172, wherein the tail light delayed return to bright is variable.

175. The method of claim 172, wherein the tail light return to bright is dependent on the detection of glare light.

176. The method of claim 175, wherein the high beams are turned on when glare is detected.

177. The method of claim 176, wherein if glare is not detected in a maximum threshold time after detecting the cleared image, the brights are turned ON even if glare has not been detected.

178. A method of automatically calibrating the aim of an image sensor in a controlled vehicle, comprising the steps of:

detecting a distant light of an oncoming vehicle;

detecting a straight road condition; and

generating a new average value from the location of the distant oncoming light averaged with a stored average if the straight road condition is detected, and

storing the new average value as the stored average signal.

179. The method of claim 178, wherein the step of detecting a distant light comprises detecting a faint light near the center of the image sensor.

180. The method of claim 178, wherein the step of detecting a straight road detects the lateral movement of the controlled vehicle over a period of time.

181. The method of claim 180, wherein the period of time is from the time that the distant light is detected until a time period after the distant vehicle and the controlled vehicle have passed.

182. The method of claim 178, further including the step of detecting elevation change of the controlled vehicle.

183. The method of claim 180, wherein lateral movement is detected by determining the lateral movement of the distant headlamp.

184. The method of claim 180, wherein lateral movement is detected using a global positioning system.

185. The method of claim 180, wherein lateral movement is detected from a compass.

186. The method of claim 180, wherein lateral movement is detected from operation of the steering system.

187. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

analyzing the pixel levels associated with a scene, wherein the analysis is altered when the vehicle turns; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis.

188. The method of claim 187, wherein the image analyzed is shifted when the vehicle turns.

189. The method of claim 187, wherein the image analyzed is shifted when the vehicle turn signal is actuated.

190. The method of claim 187, wherein the analysis of the image is altered when the vehicle heading as detected from a compass is altered.

191. The method of claim 189, wherein the analysis is altered after actuation of the vehicle brakes following actuation of the vehicle's turn signal.

192. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor, wherein the pixel levels are stored while the vehicle headlamps are off;

analyzing the pixels to detect objects; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis.

193. The method of claim 192, wherein the vehicle includes semiconductor radiation emitter light source, wherein the light is flashed off for a very short interval.

194. The method of claim 193, wherein the off interval is less than 60 ms.

195. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged through a variable filter and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor when the variable filter is filtering light of at least a first wavelength;

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor through the variable filter when the variable filter is not filtering light of at least the first wavelength;

analyzing the associated pixels to identify objects; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis.

196. A method of automatically controlling vehicle headlamps in a system comprising an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged through a windshield, a windshield wiper for clearing the windshield, and a controller to generate headlamp control signals, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving signals indicative of the location of the windshield wiper;

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor when the windshield wiper is not in front of the image sensor;

analyzing the associated pixels to identify objects; and

selectively generating a headlamp control signal in accordance with the results of the analysis.

197. The method of claim 196, further including the step of monitoring the window using an image sensor focused on the window to detect the presence of the windshield wiper in the field of view of the image sensor for detecting objects.

198. The method of claim 196, further including the step of monitoring the windshield wipers to detect their position.

199. A vehicle system, comprising:

an image sensor for detecting lights;

an ambient light sensor;

a glare sensor;

an electrochromic element for controlling the reflectivity of a mirror;

headlamps; and

a controller coupled to the image sensor, the ambient light detector, the glare sensor, the electrochromic element, and the headlamps, wherein the controller is operable to control the headlamps responsive to the image sensor and the ambient light sensor, and the controller being further operable to control the transmittance of the electrochromic element responsive to the ambient light sensor and the glare sensor.

200. The vehicle system of claim 199, wherein at least one of said controller, glare sensor, ambient light sensor, and image sensor are supported by a rearview mirror assembly of the vehicle.

201. A method of operating an image sensor generating a plurality of pixel levels from a scene being imaged, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving pixel levels from the image sensor;

identifying a bad pixel if a pixel continuously detects light when adjacent pixels do not detect light; and

selectively compensating for the identified pixels.

202. The method of claim 201, wherein the step of identifying a pixel that continuously detects light comprises determining that the pixel detects light over a predetermined number of frames.

203. The method of claim 202, wherein the step of identifying includes detecting when a pixel detects light above a pixel threshold over a predetermined number of frames and adjacent frames do not detect light above a pixel threshold over the predetermined number of frames.

204. The method of claim 201, wherein the step of selectively compensating comprises generating an average of the adjacent pixels and substituting the generated average for the pixel level measurement of the bad pixel.

205. A vehicle system, comprising:

an image sensor focused at a distance for detecting lights;

an image sensor focused near the window;

windshield wipers;

headlamps; and

a controller coupled to the image sensor, the ambient light detector, the image sensor focused near the window, the windshield wipers, and the headlamps, wherein the controller is operable to control the headlamps responsive to the image sensor, control the windshield wipers to operate when rain is on the window, and the controller being further operable to control the image sensor to image a scene when the windshield wipers are not in front of the image sensor focused at a distance.

206. A method of making an optical sensor assembly package including an image sensor die comprising the steps of:

covering the die with an epoxy;

positioning an adhesive on the epoxy;

positioning a lens structure on the adhesive; and

curing the adhesive to form the integral package.

207. The method of claim 206, further including the step of molding the lens structure to include a lens.

208. The method of claim 207, further including the step of molding the lens structure to include a first lens having a filter for removing light of at least a first wave length.

209. The method of claim 208, further including the step of molding the lens structure to include a second lens passing at least light of the first wave length.

210. The method of claim 206, wherein the step of covering includes covering the die with a glob-top epoxy.

211. The method of claim 206, further including the step of applying at least one filter to the surface of the image sensor die.

212. The method of claim 211, wherein the step of applying at least one filter includes applying two or more filters to respective areas on the surface of the sensor.

213. The method of claim 206, further including the step of mounting an electronically controlled filter.

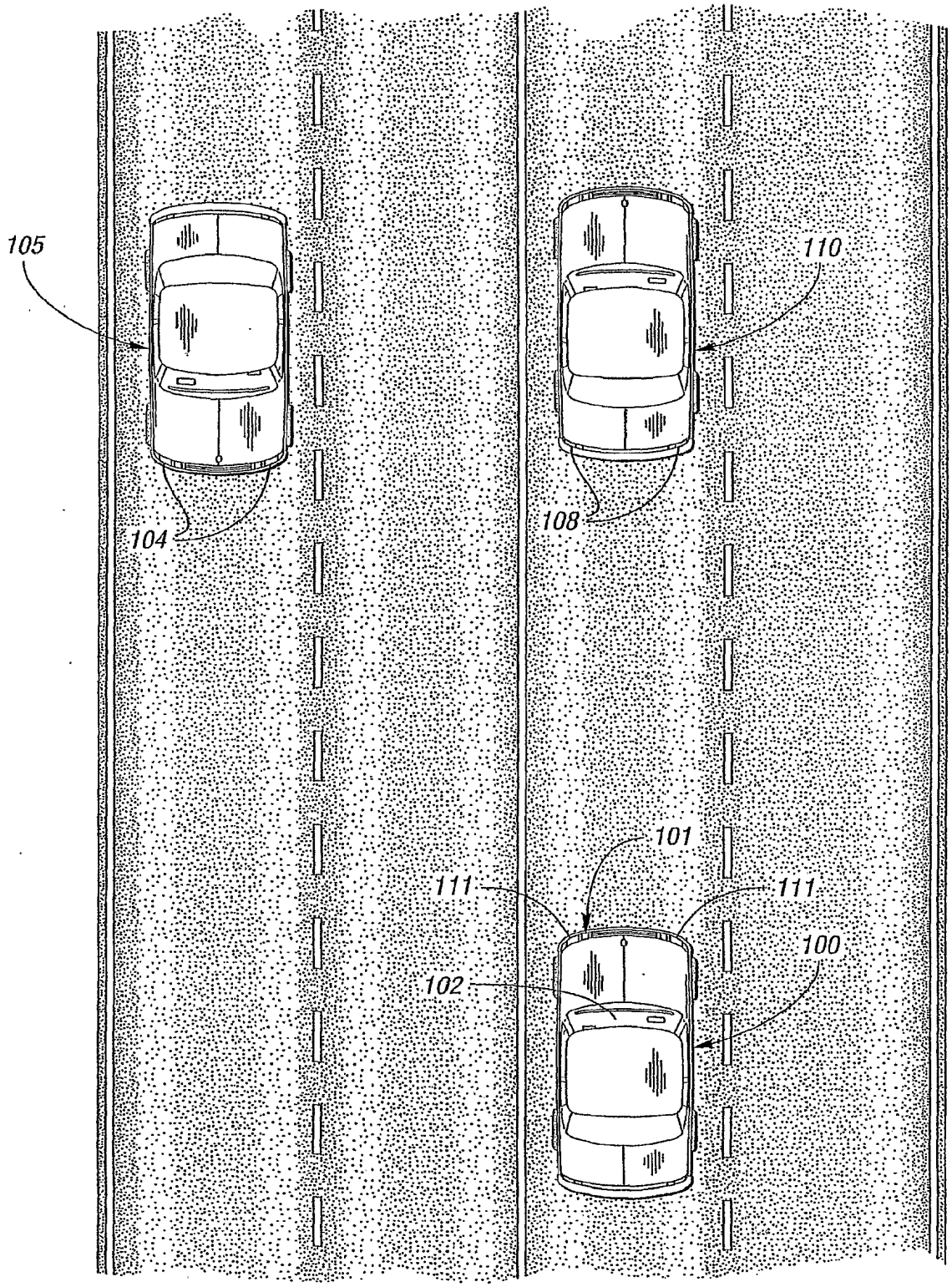


Fig. 1

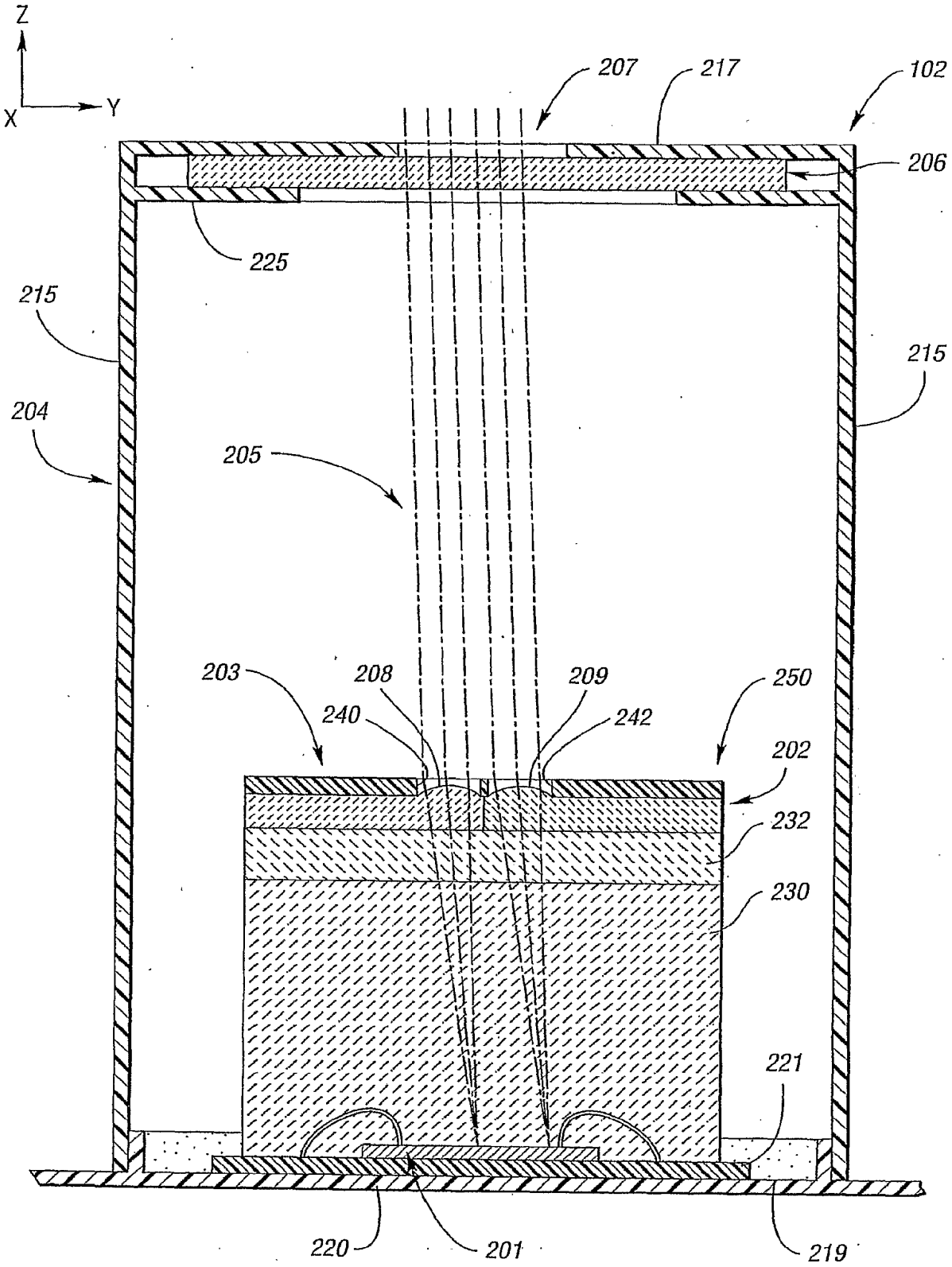

Z
X
Y
207
217
102
206
225
215
215
204
205
203
208
209
250
240
242
202
232
230
221
220
201
219

Fig. 2a

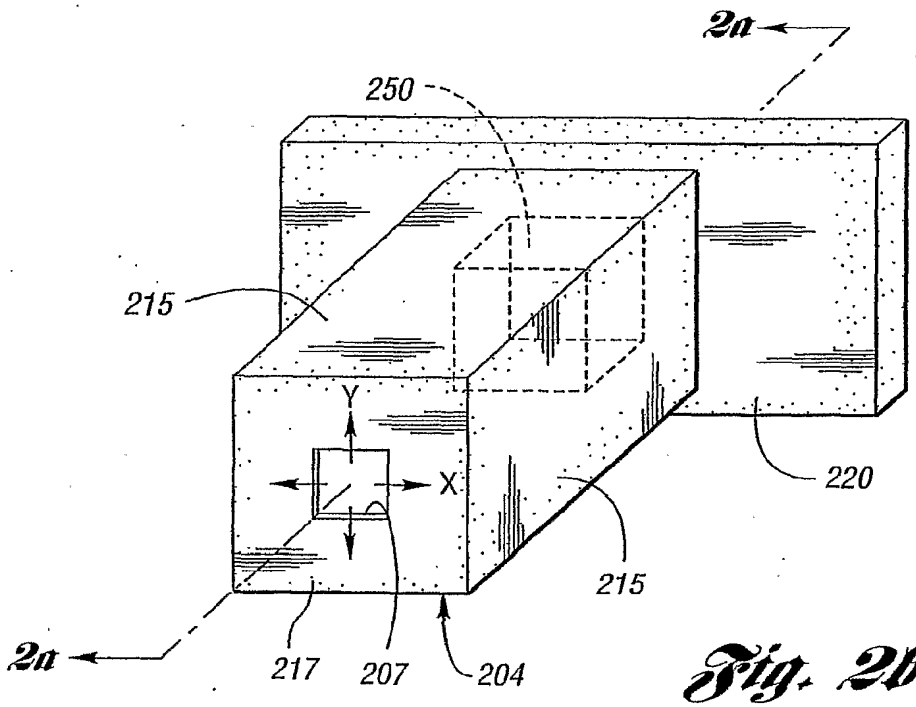

2a
250
215
Y
X
220
215
2a
217
207
204

Fig. 2b

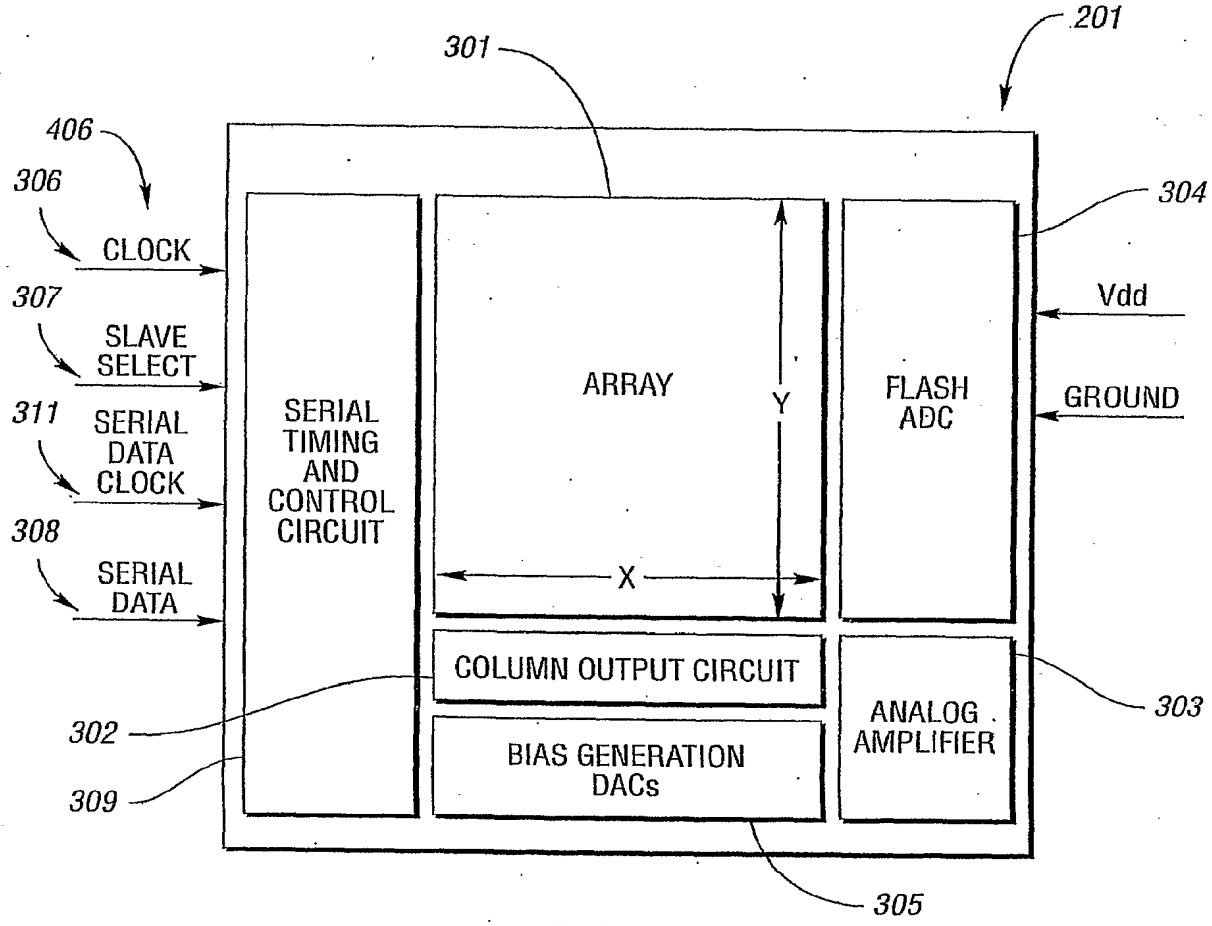

201
301
406
306
CLOCK
307
SLAVE SELECT
311
SERIAL DATA CLOCK
308
SERIAL DATA
SERIAL TIMING AND CONTROL CIRCUIT
ARRAY
Y
X
304
FLASH ADC
Vdd
GROUND
COLUMN OUTPUT CIRCUIT
303
ANALOG AMPLIFIER
302
BIAS GENERATION DACs
309
305

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

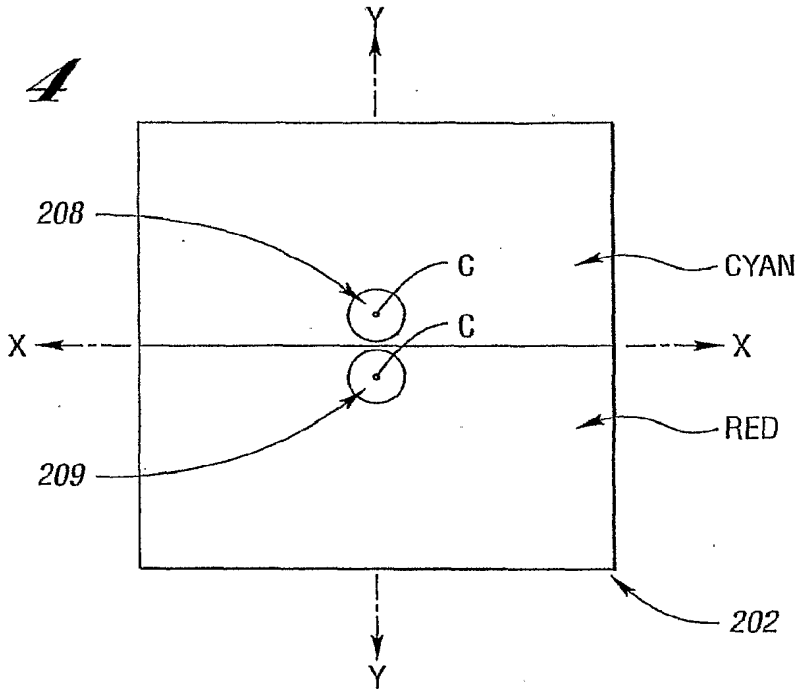


Fig. 5

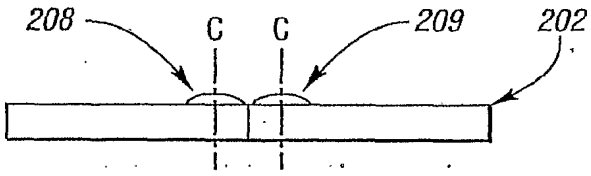


Fig. 6

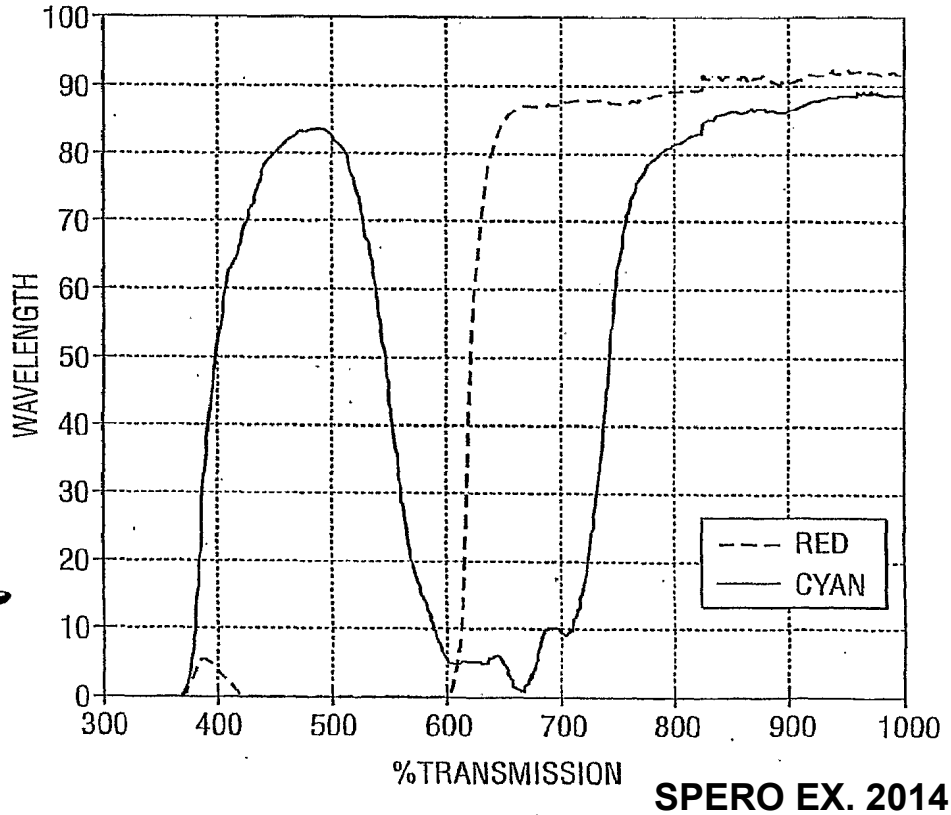


Fig. 7

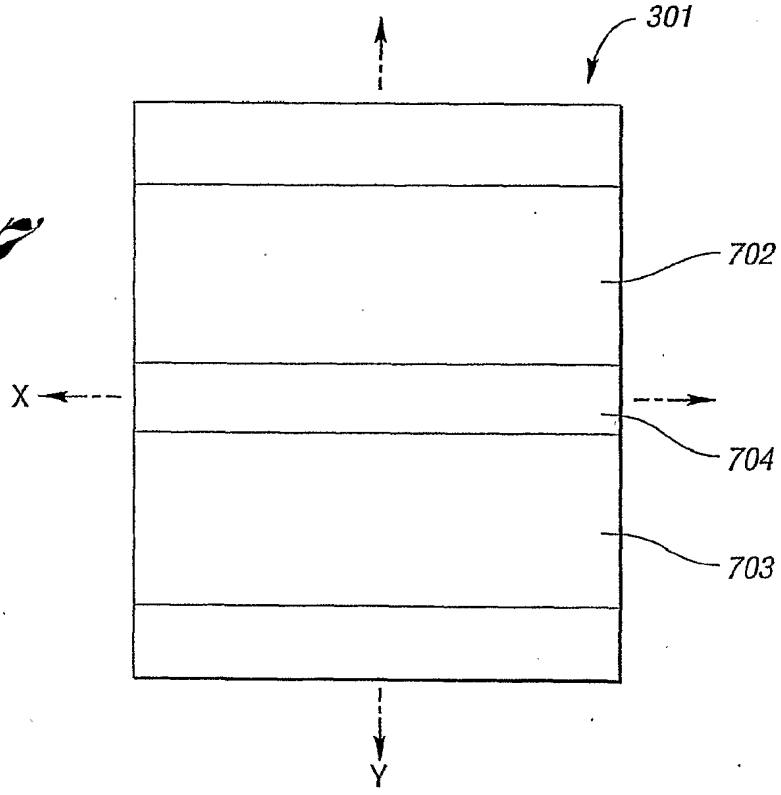
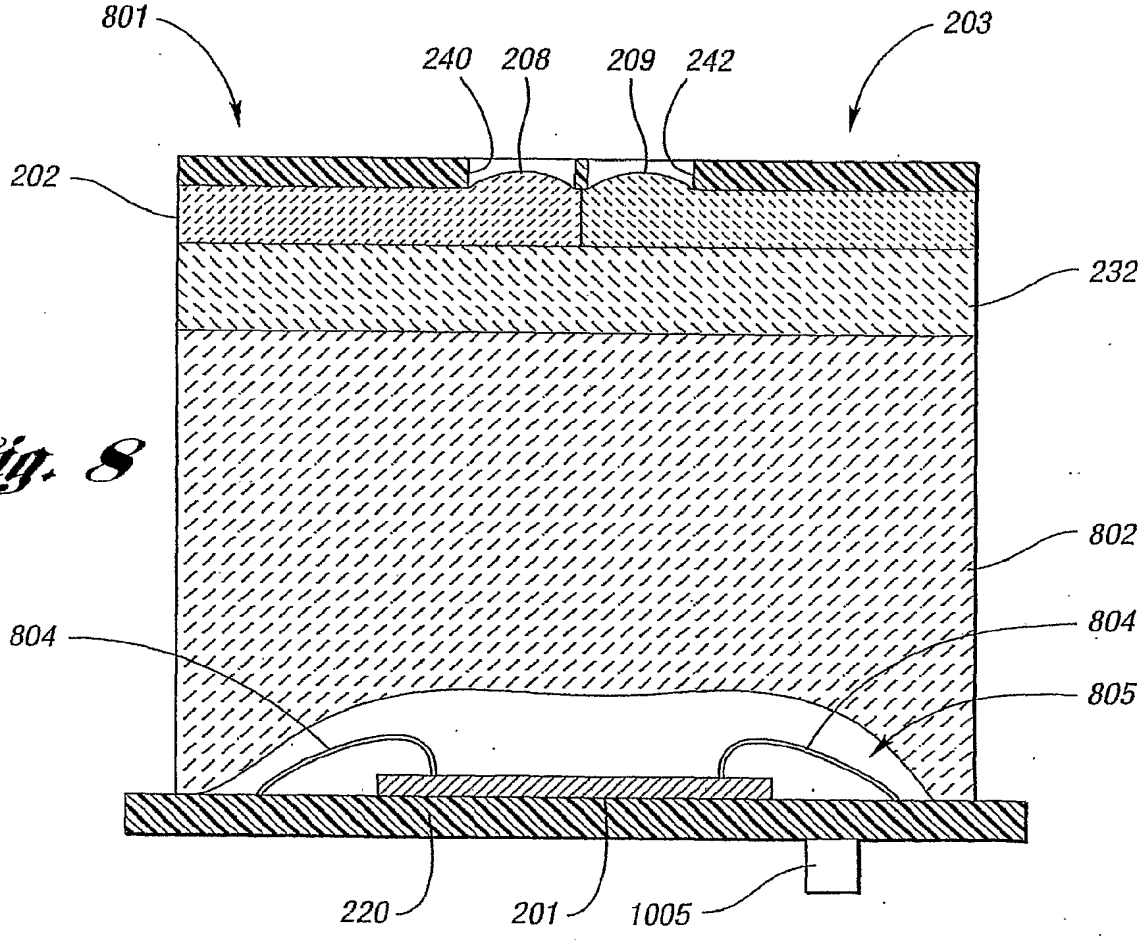

301
702
X
704
703
Y

Fig. 8


801
240
208
209
242
203
202
232
802
804
804
805
220
201
1005

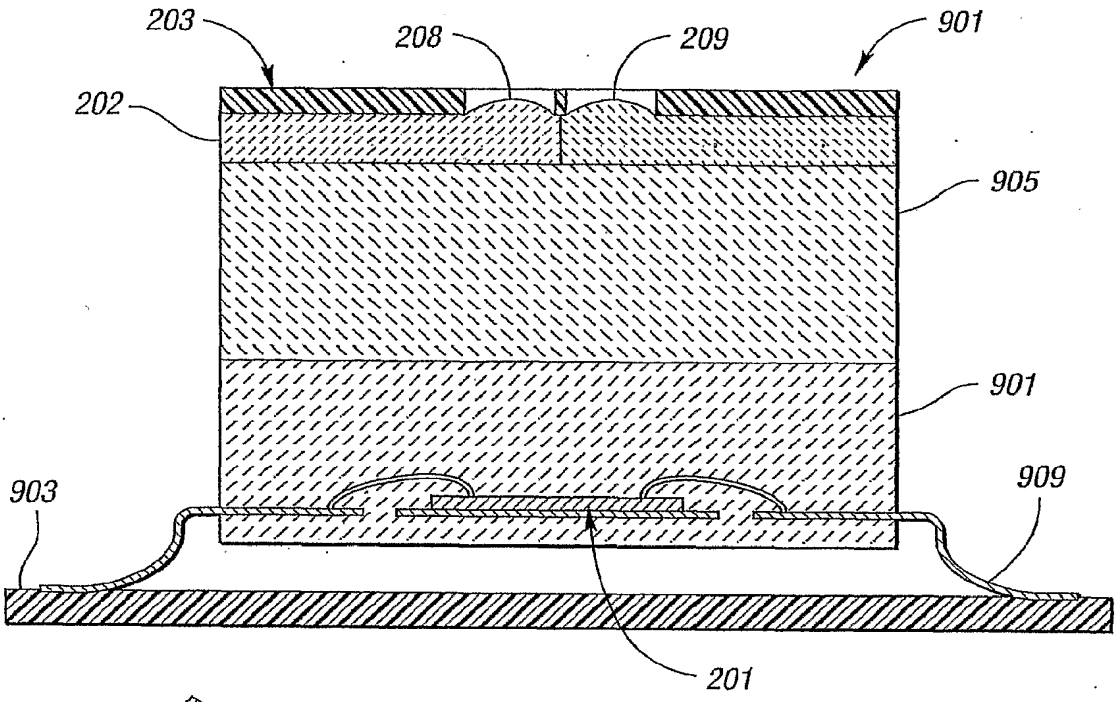

203
208
209
901
202
905
901
903
909
201

Fig. 9

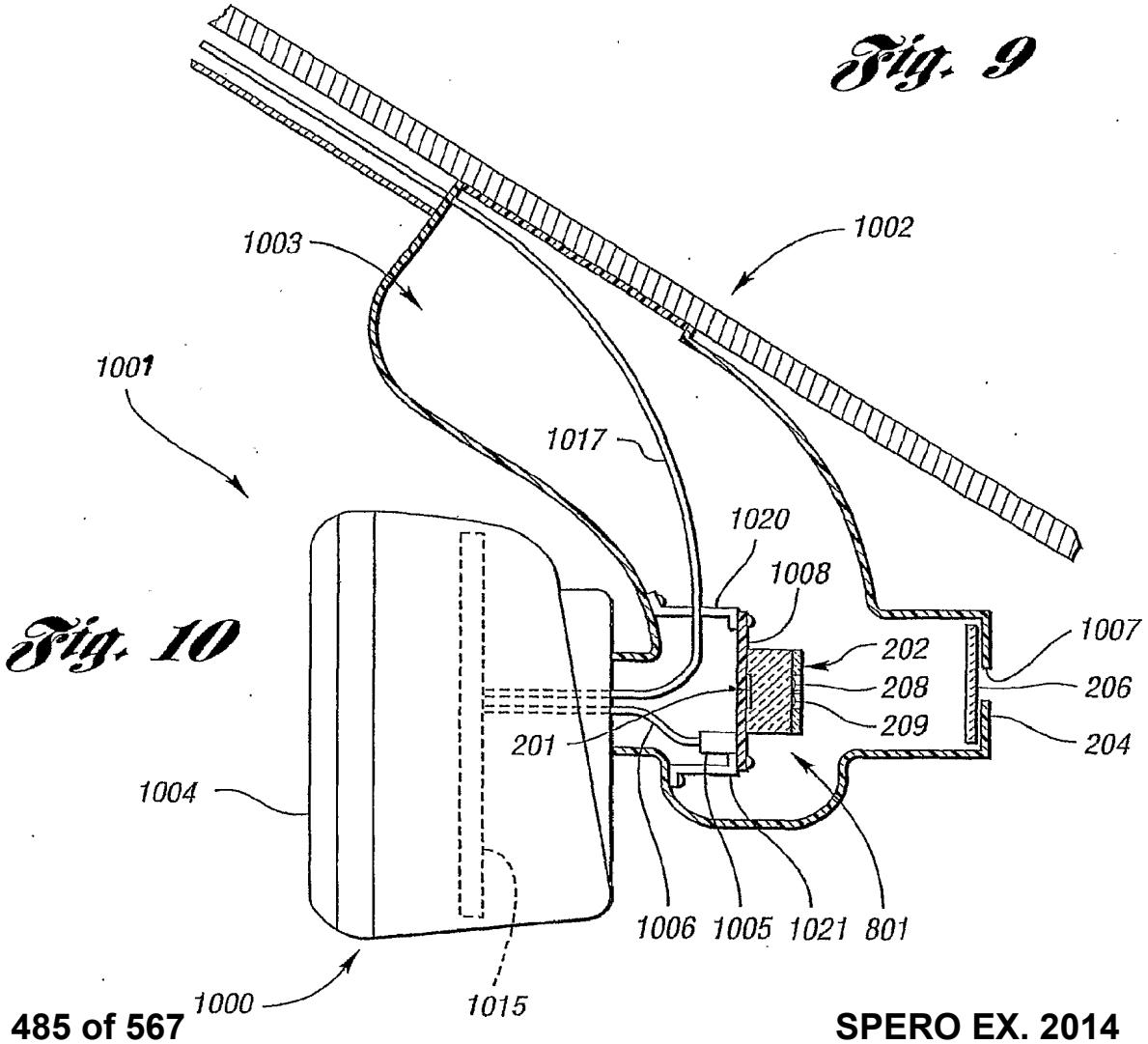

1002
1003
1001
1017
1020
1008
1007
202
208
209
206
204
201
1004
1006
1005
1021
801
1000
1015

Fig. 10

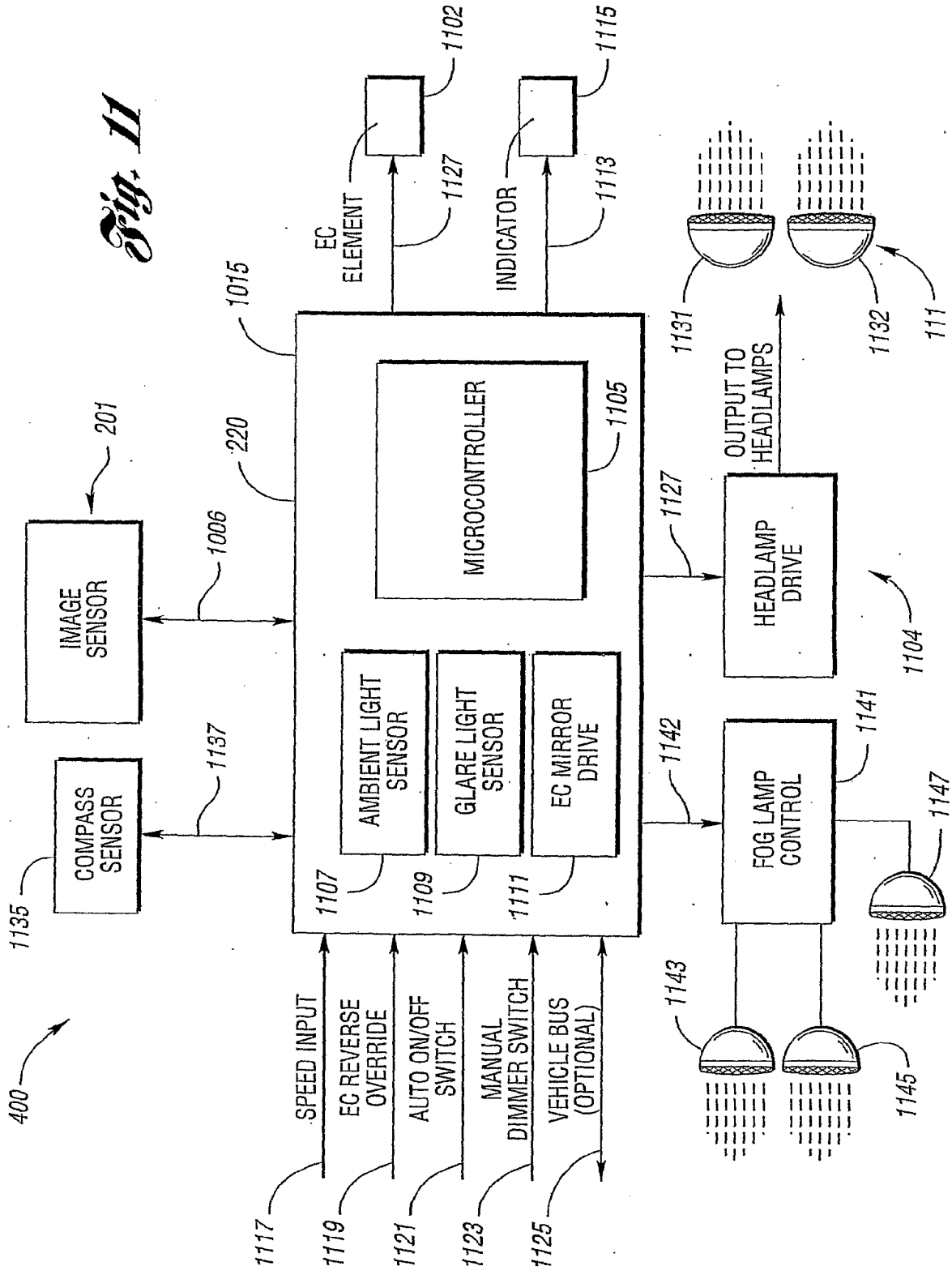

400
1135
COMPASS SENSOR
1137
IMAGE SENSOR
201
1006
220
1015
MICROCONTROLLER
1105
AMBIENT LIGHT SENSOR
1107
GLARE LIGHT SENSOR
1109
EC MIRROR DRIVE
1111
EC ELEMENT
1102
1127
INDICATOR
1115
1113
1127
HEADLAMP DRIVE
1104
OUTPUT TO HEADLAMPS
1131
1132
111
1142
FOG LAMP CONTROL
1141
1147
1143
1145
SPEED INPUT
1117
EC REVERSE OVERRIDE
1119
AUTO ON/OFF SWITCH
1121
MANUAL DIMMER SWITCH
1123
VEHICLE BUS (OPTIONAL)
1125

Fig. 11

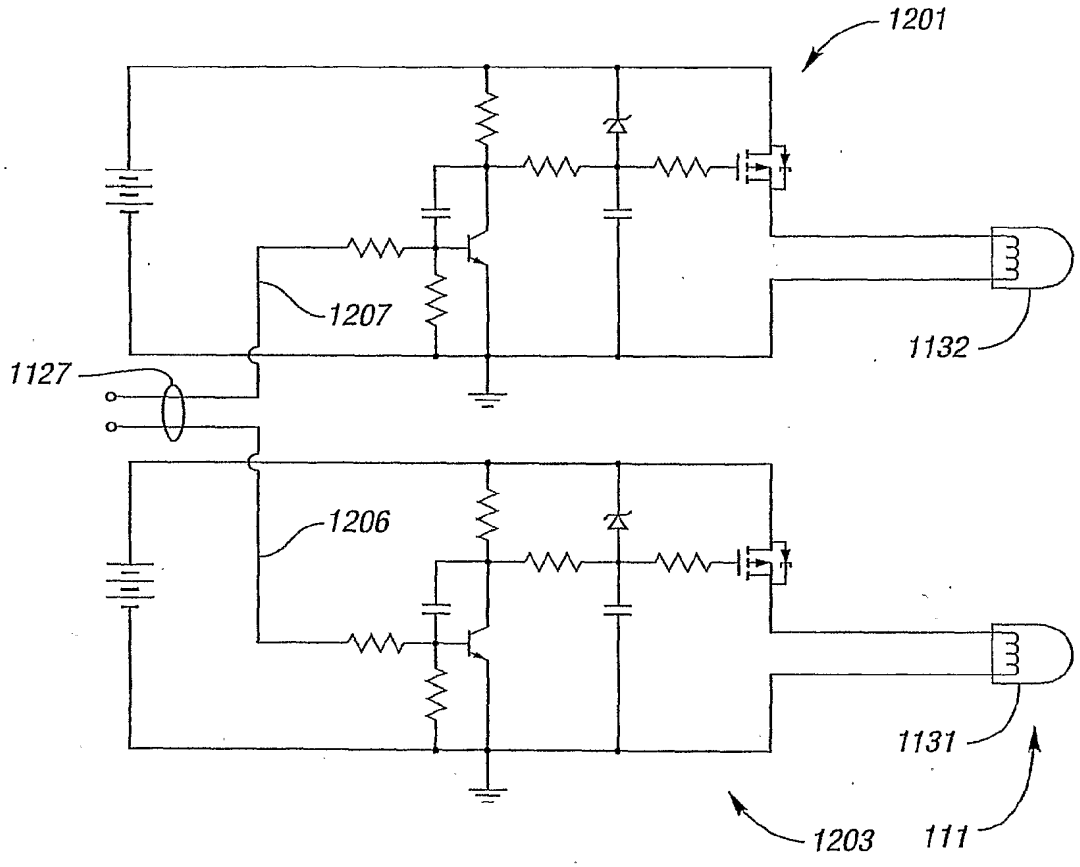


Fig. 12

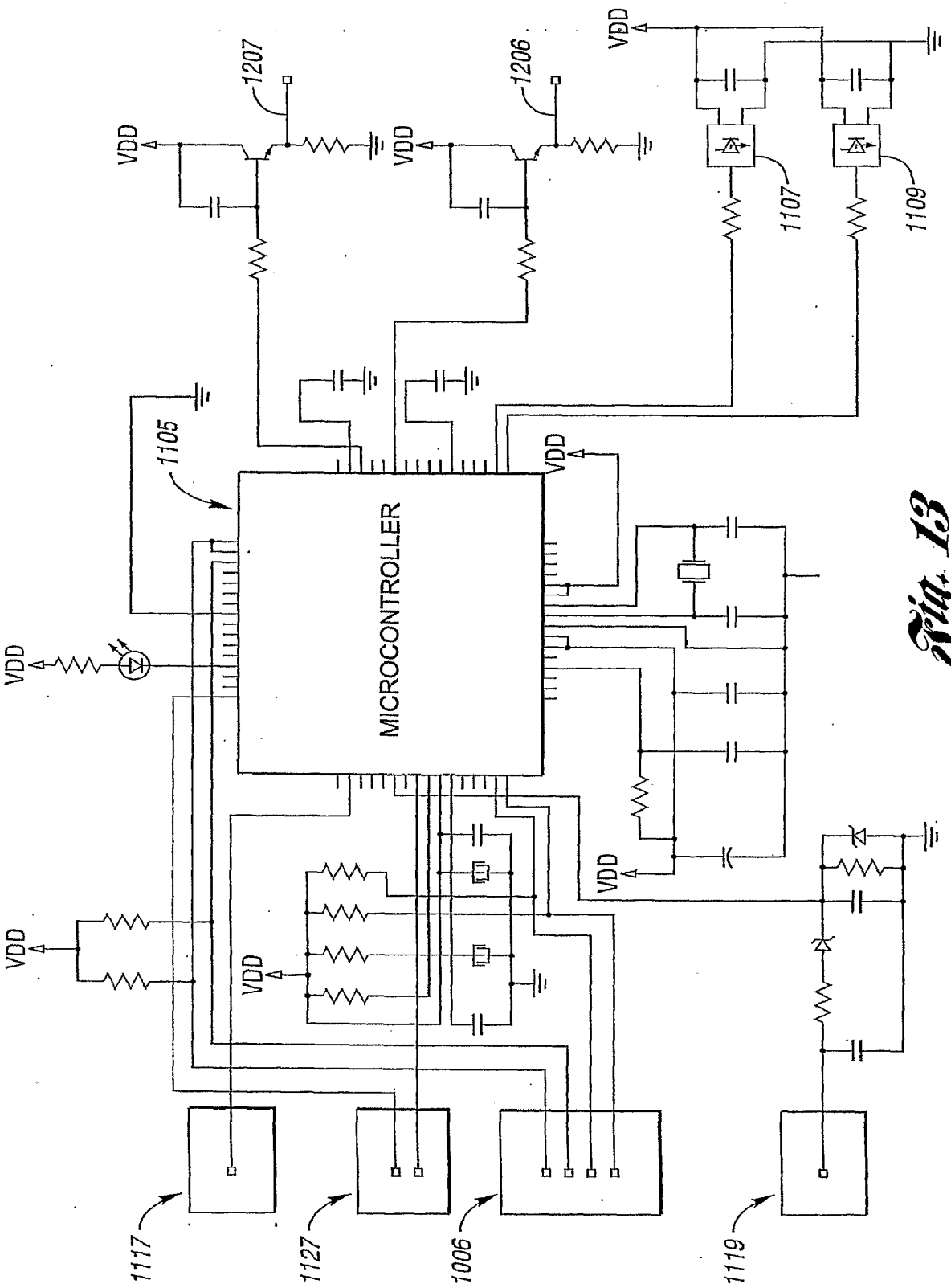

VDD
1207
1206
1107
1109
1105
MICROCONTROLLER
1117
1127
1006
1119

Fig. 13

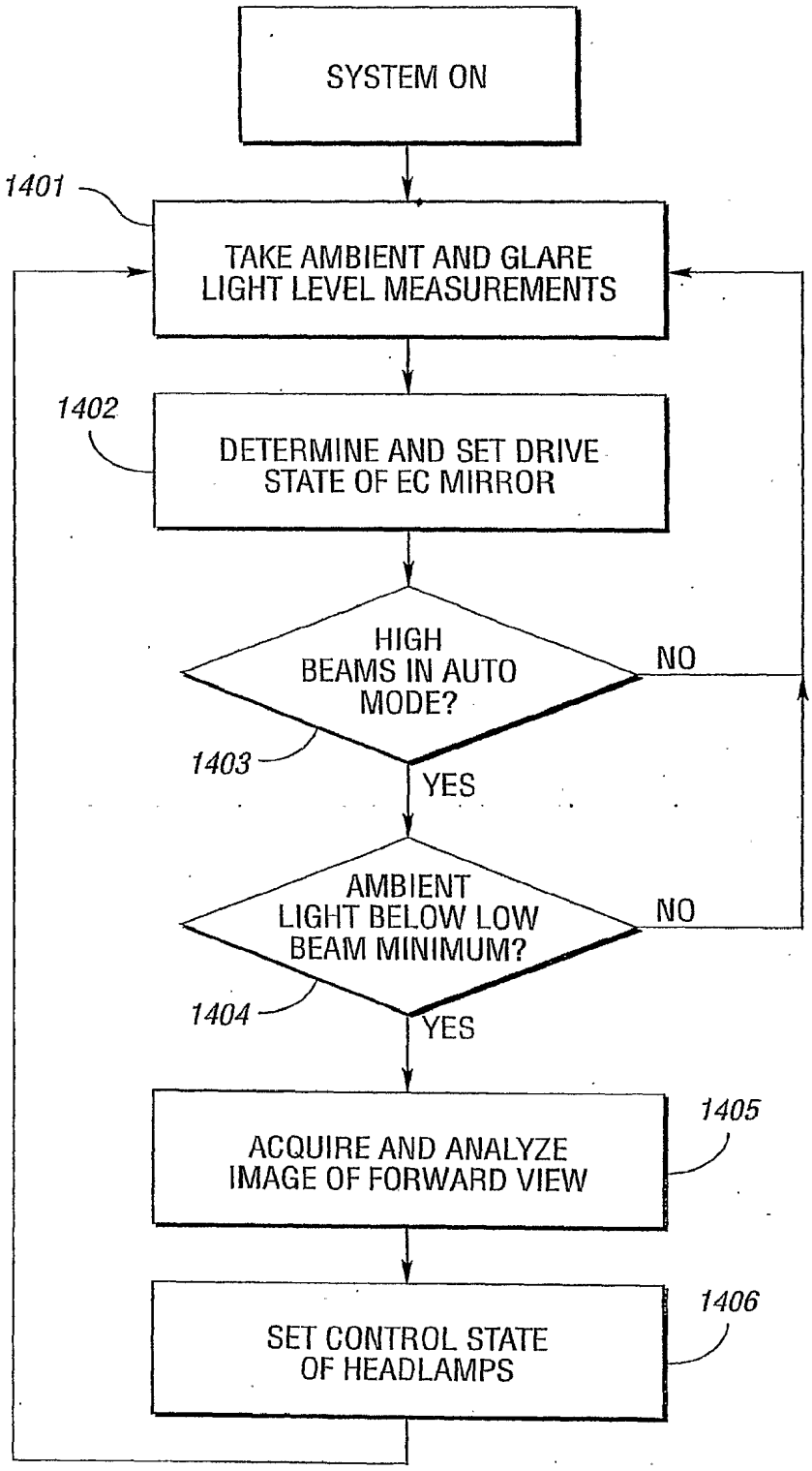

SYSTEM ON
1401
TAKE AMBIENT AND GLARE LIGHT LEVEL MEASUREMENTS
1402
DETERMINE AND SET DRIVE STATE OF EC MIRROR
HIGH BEAMS IN AUTO MODE?
NO
1403
YES
AMBIENT LIGHT BELOW LOW BEAM MINIMUM?
NO
1404
YES
1405
ACQUIRE AND ANALYZE IMAGE OF FORWARD VIEW
1406
SET CONTROL STATE OF HEADLAMPS

Fig. 14

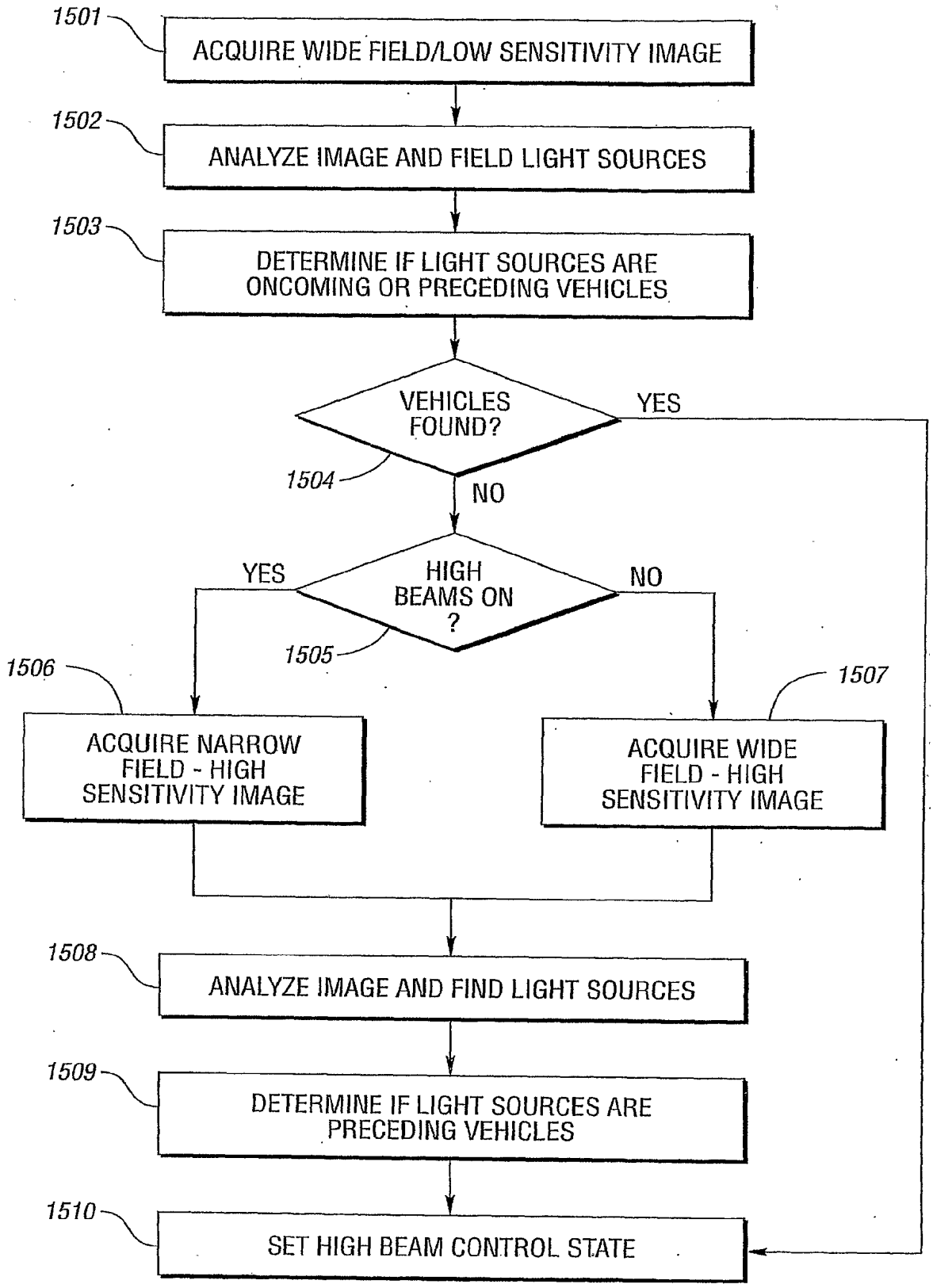

1501
ACQUIRE WIDE FIELD/LOW SENSITIVITY IMAGE
1502
ANALYZE IMAGE AND FIELD LIGHT SOURCES
1503
DETERMINE IF LIGHT SOURCES ARE ONCOMING OR PRECEDING VEHICLES
VEHICLES FOUND?
YES
1504
NO
YES
HIGH BEAMS ON ?
NO
1505
1506
ACQUIRE NARROW FIELD - HIGH SENSITIVITY IMAGE
1507
ACQUIRE WIDE FIELD - HIGH SENSITIVITY IMAGE
1508
ANALYZE IMAGE AND FIND LIGHT SOURCES
1509
DETERMINE IF LIGHT SOURCES ARE PRECEDING VEHICLES
1510
SET HIGH BEAM CONTROL STATE

Fig. 15

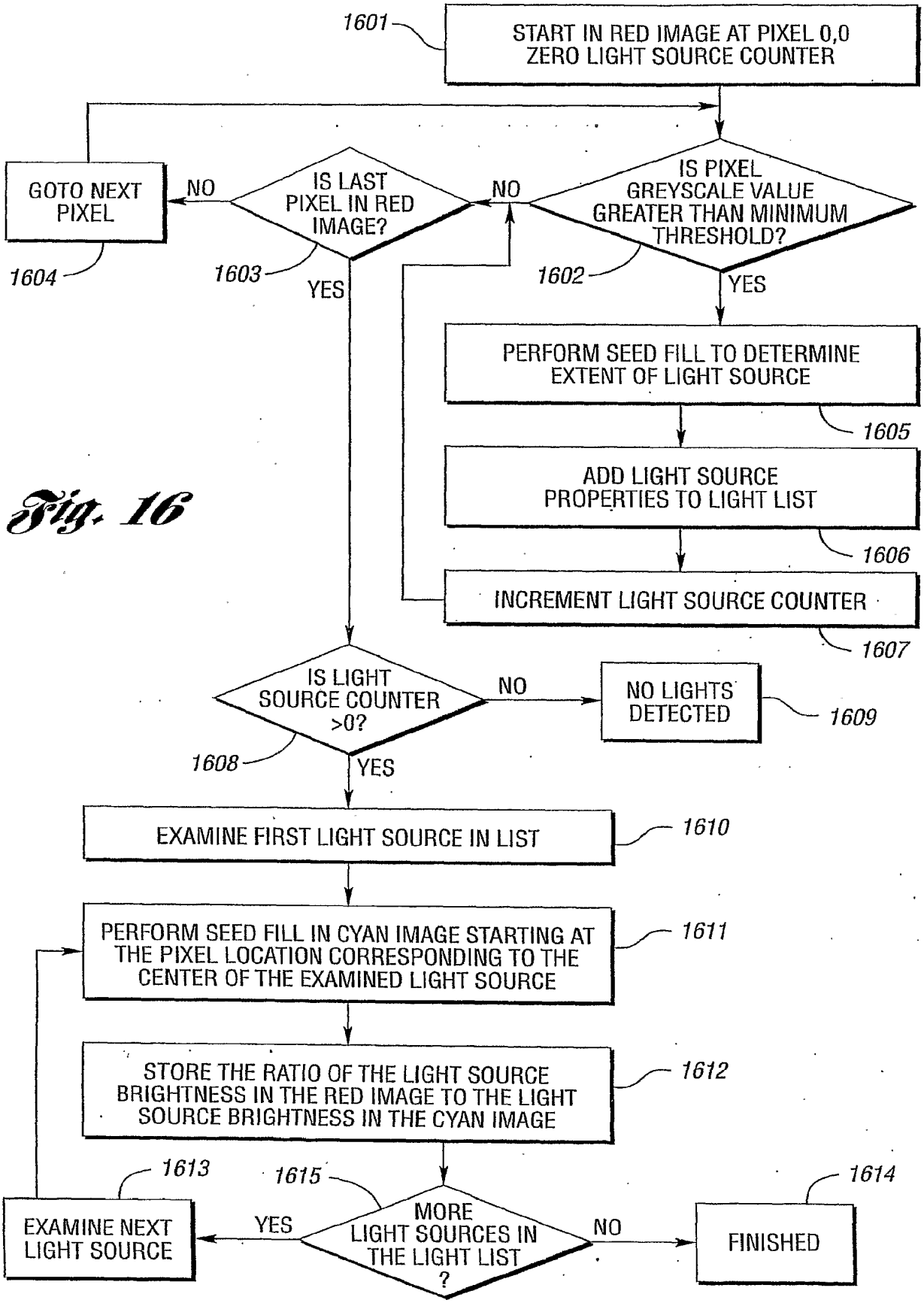

1601
START IN RED IMAGE AT PIXEL 0,0
ZERO LIGHT SOURCE COUNTER
IS PIXEL GREYSCALE VALUE GREATER THAN MINIMUM THRESHOLD?
1602
NO
YES
IS LAST PIXEL IN RED IMAGE?
1603
NO
YES
GOTO NEXT PIXEL
1604
PERFORM SEED FILL TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF LIGHT SOURCE
1605
ADD LIGHT SOURCE PROPERTIES TO LIGHT LIST
1606
INCREMENT LIGHT SOURCE COUNTER
1607
IS LIGHT SOURCE COUNTER >0?
1608
NO
YES
NO LIGHTS DETECTED
1609
EXAMINE FIRST LIGHT SOURCE IN LIST
1610
PERFORM SEED FILL IN CYAN IMAGE STARTING AT THE PIXEL LOCATION CORRESPONDING TO THE CENTER OF THE EXAMINED LIGHT SOURCE
1611
STORE THE RATIO OF THE LIGHT SOURCE BRIGHTNESS IN THE RED IMAGE TO THE LIGHT SOURCE BRIGHTNESS IN THE CYAN IMAGE
1612
MORE LIGHT SOURCES IN THE LIGHT LIST ?
1615
YES
NO
EXAMINE NEXT LIGHT SOURCE
1613
FINISHED
1614

Fig. 16

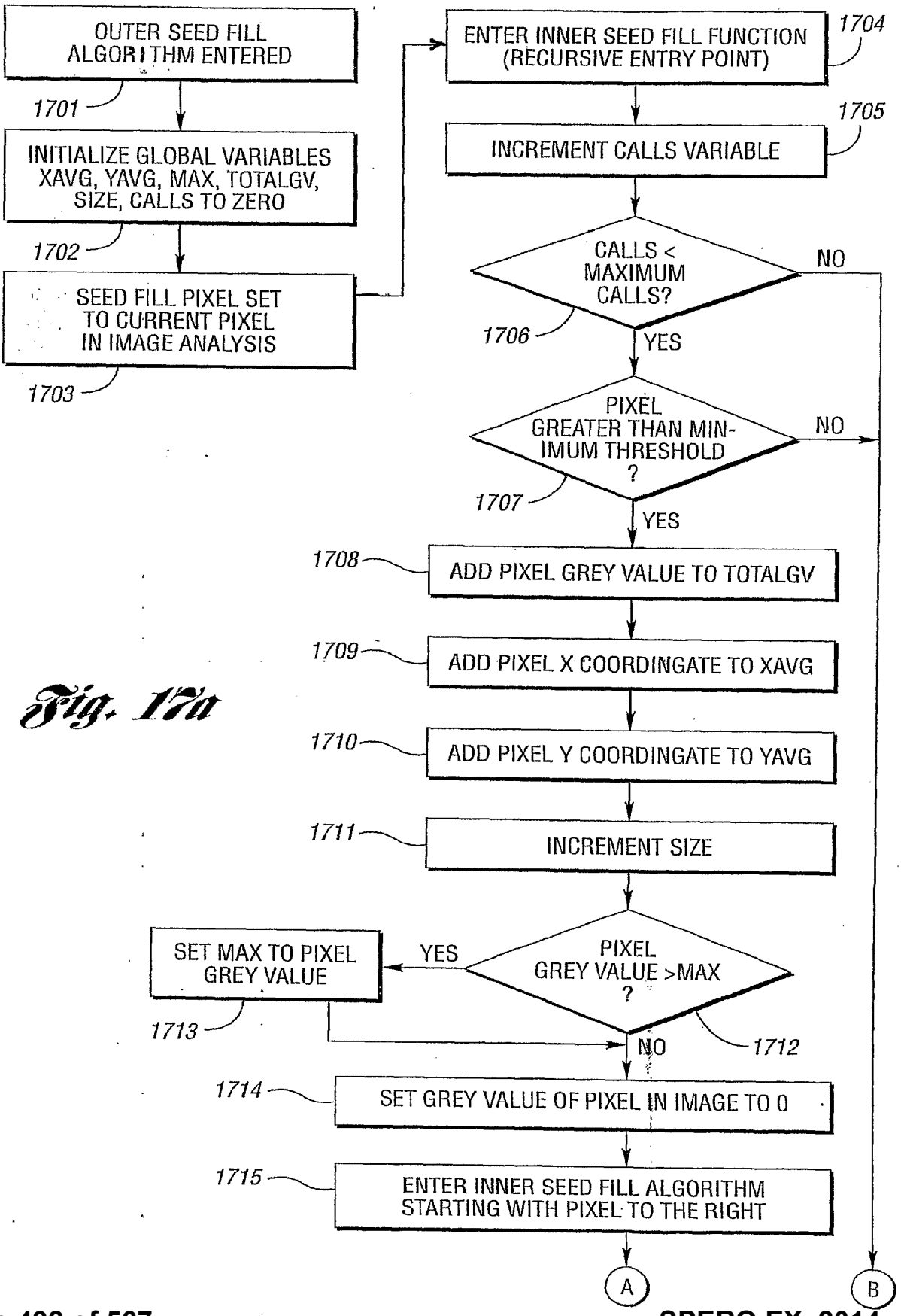

OUTER SEED FILL ALGORITHM ENTERED
1701
INITIALIZE GLOBAL VARIABLES XAVG, YAVG, MAX, TOTALGV, SIZE, CALLS TO ZERO
1702
SEED FILL PIXEL SET TO CURRENT PIXEL IN IMAGE ANALYSIS
1703
ENTER INNER SEED FILL FUNCTION (RECURSIVE ENTRY POINT)
1704
INCREMENT CALLS VARIABLE
1705
CALLS < MAXIMUM CALLS?
1706
NO
YES
PIXEL GREATER THAN MIN-IMUM THRESHOLD ?
1707
NO
YES
1708
ADD PIXEL GREY VALUE TO TOTALGV
1709
ADD PIXEL X COORDINGATE TO XAVG
1710
ADD PIXEL Y COORDINGATE TO YAVG
1711
INCREMENT SIZE
PIXEL GREY VALUE >MAX ?
YES
SET MAX TO PIXEL GREY VALUE
1713
1712
NO
1714
SET GREY VALUE OF PIXEL IN IMAGE TO 0
1715
ENTER INNER SEED FILL ALGORITHM STARTING WITH PIXEL TO THE RIGHT
A
B

Fig. 17a

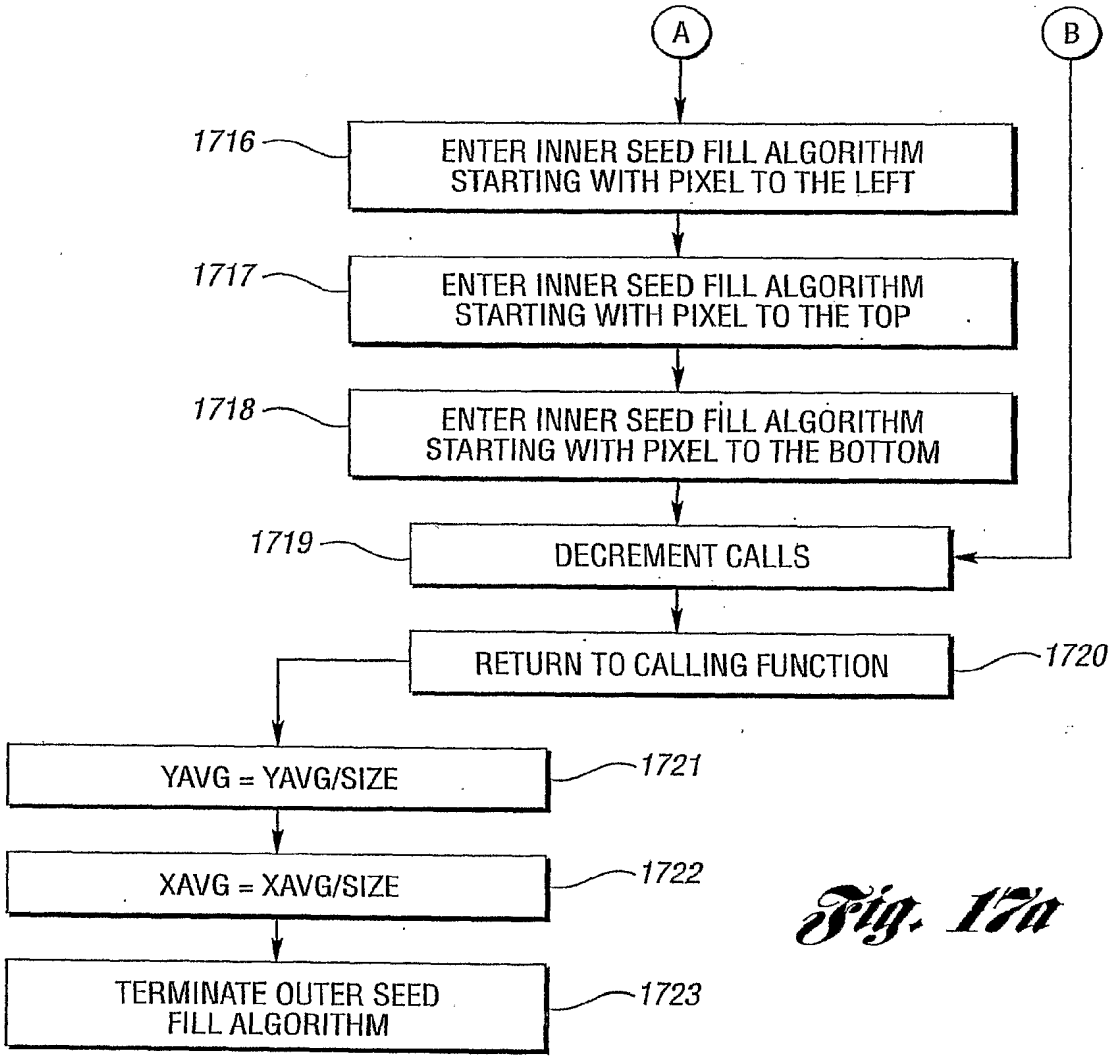


Fig. 17a

Fig. 17b

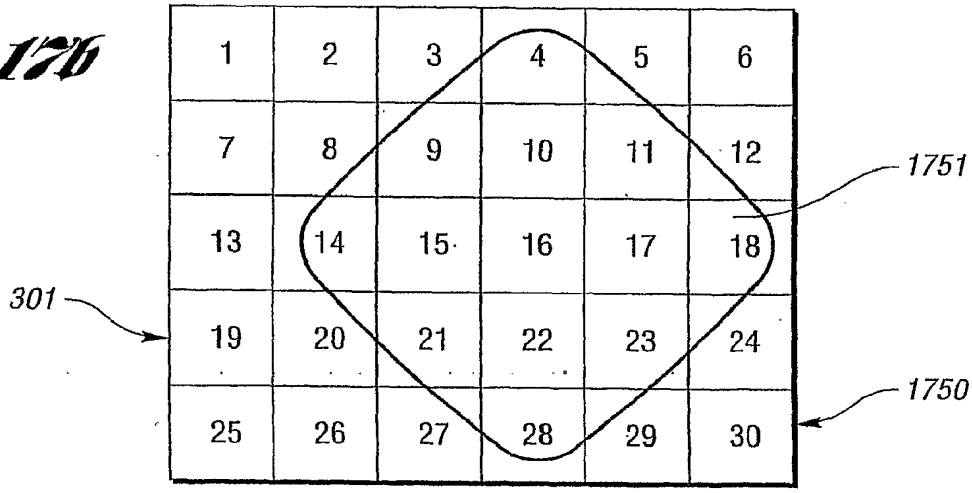
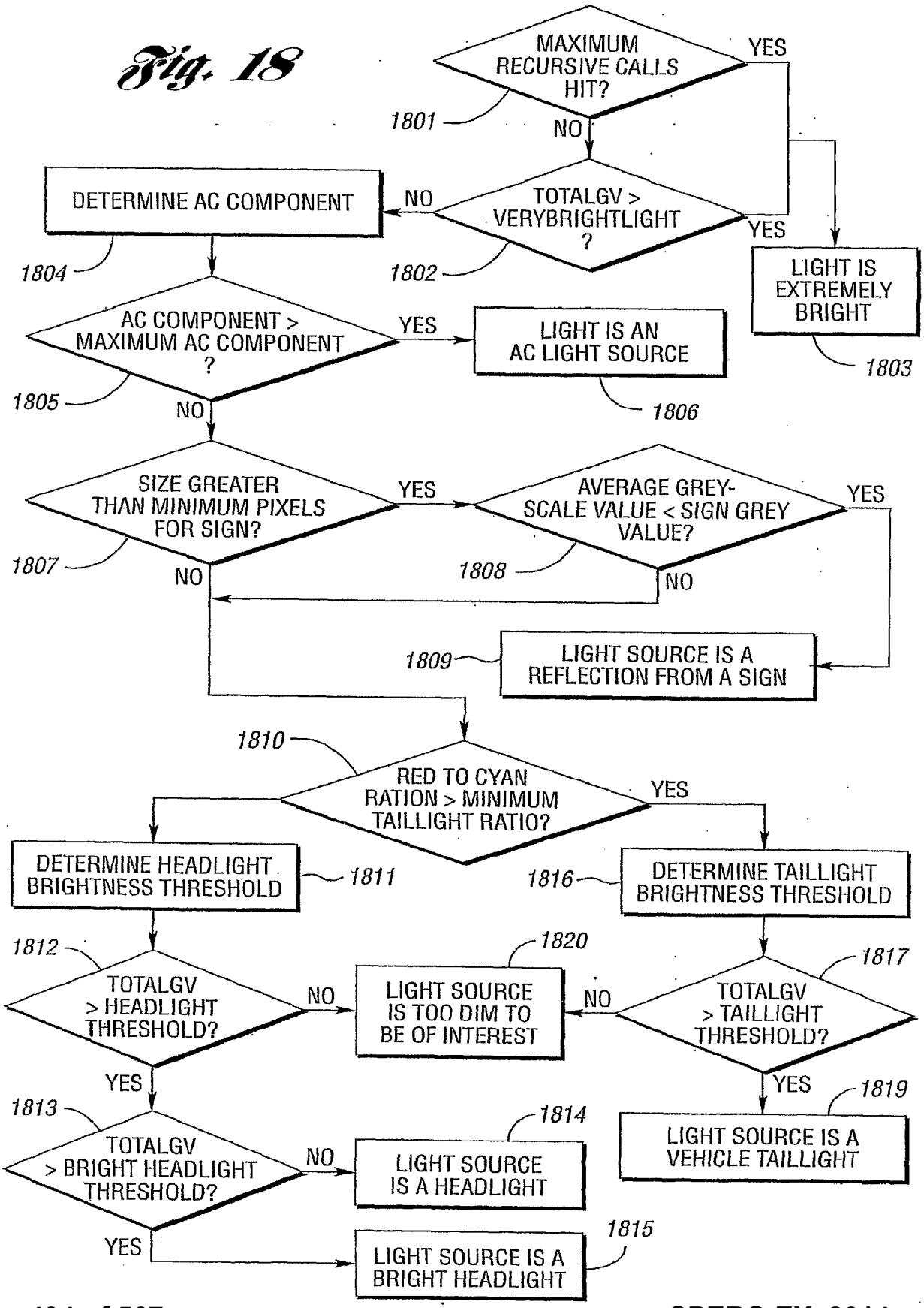


Fig. 18


MAXIMUM RECURSIVE CALLS HIT?
YES
1801
NO
DETERMINE AC COMPONENT
NO
TOTALGV > VERYBRIGHTLIGHT ?
YES
1804
1802
LIGHT IS EXTREMELY BRIGHT
1803
AC COMPONENT > MAXIMUM AC COMPONENT ?
YES
LIGHT IS AN AC LIGHT SOURCE
1805
1806
NO
SIZE GREATER THAN MINIMUM PIXELS FOR SIGN?
YES
AVERAGE GREY-SCALE VALUE < SIGN GREY VALUE?
YES
1807
1808
NO
NO
1809
LIGHT SOURCE IS A REFLECTION FROM A SIGN
1810
RED TO CYAN RATION > MINIMUM TAILLIGHT RATIO?
YES
DETERMINE HEADLIGHT BRIGHTNESS THRESHOLD
1811
1816
DETERMINE TAILLIGHT BRIGHTNESS THRESHOLD
1812
1820
1817
TOTALGV > HEADLIGHT THRESHOLD?
NO
LIGHT SOURCE IS TOO DIM TO BE OF INTEREST
NO
TOTALGV > TAILLIGHT THRESHOLD?
YES
YES
1813
1814
1819
TOTALGV > BRIGHT HEADLIGHT THRESHOLD?
NO
LIGHT SOURCE IS A HEADLIGHT
LIGHT SOURCE IS A VEHICLE TAILLIGHT
YES
1815
LIGHT SOURCE IS A BRIGHT HEADLIGHT

16/40

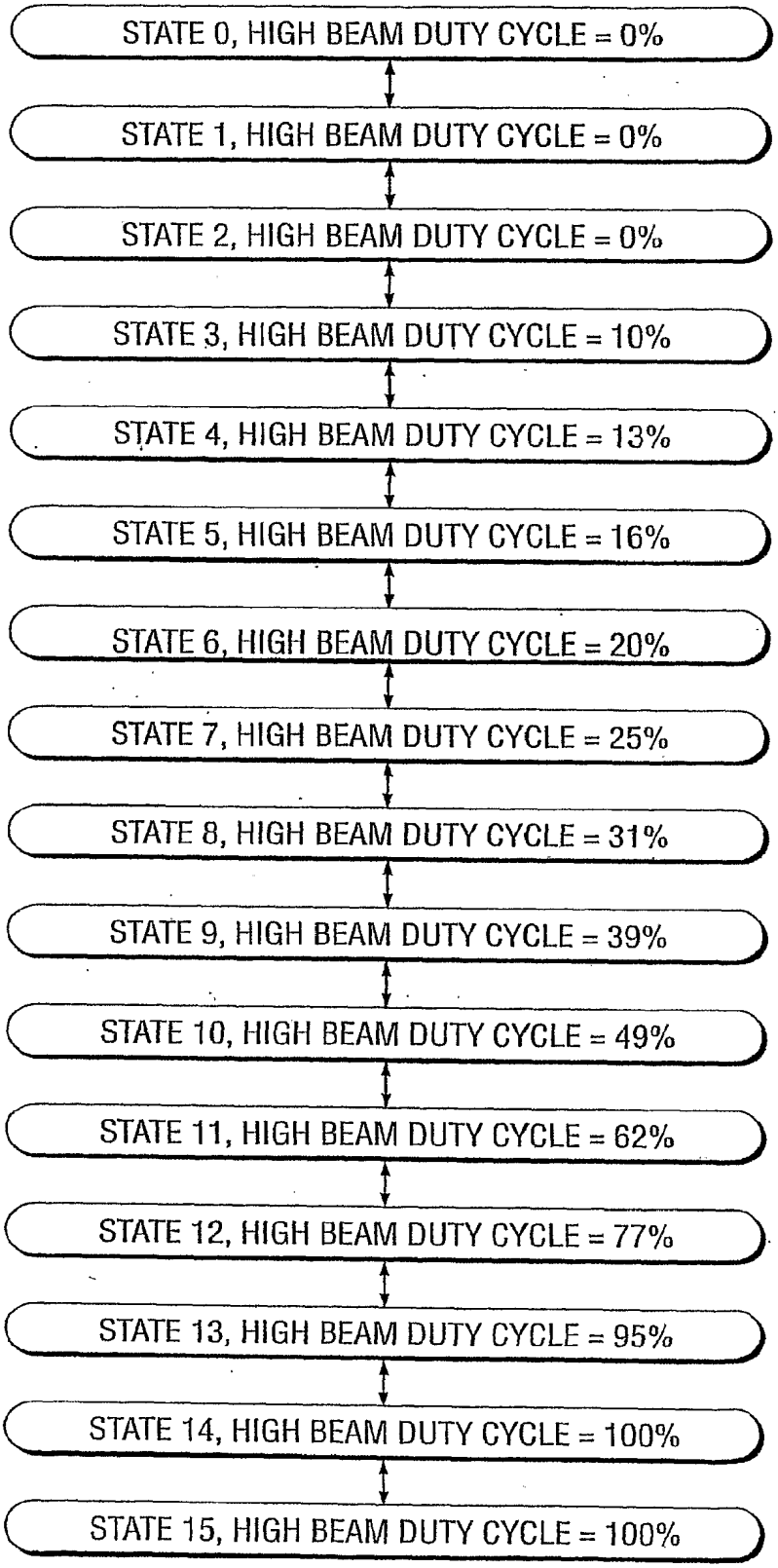
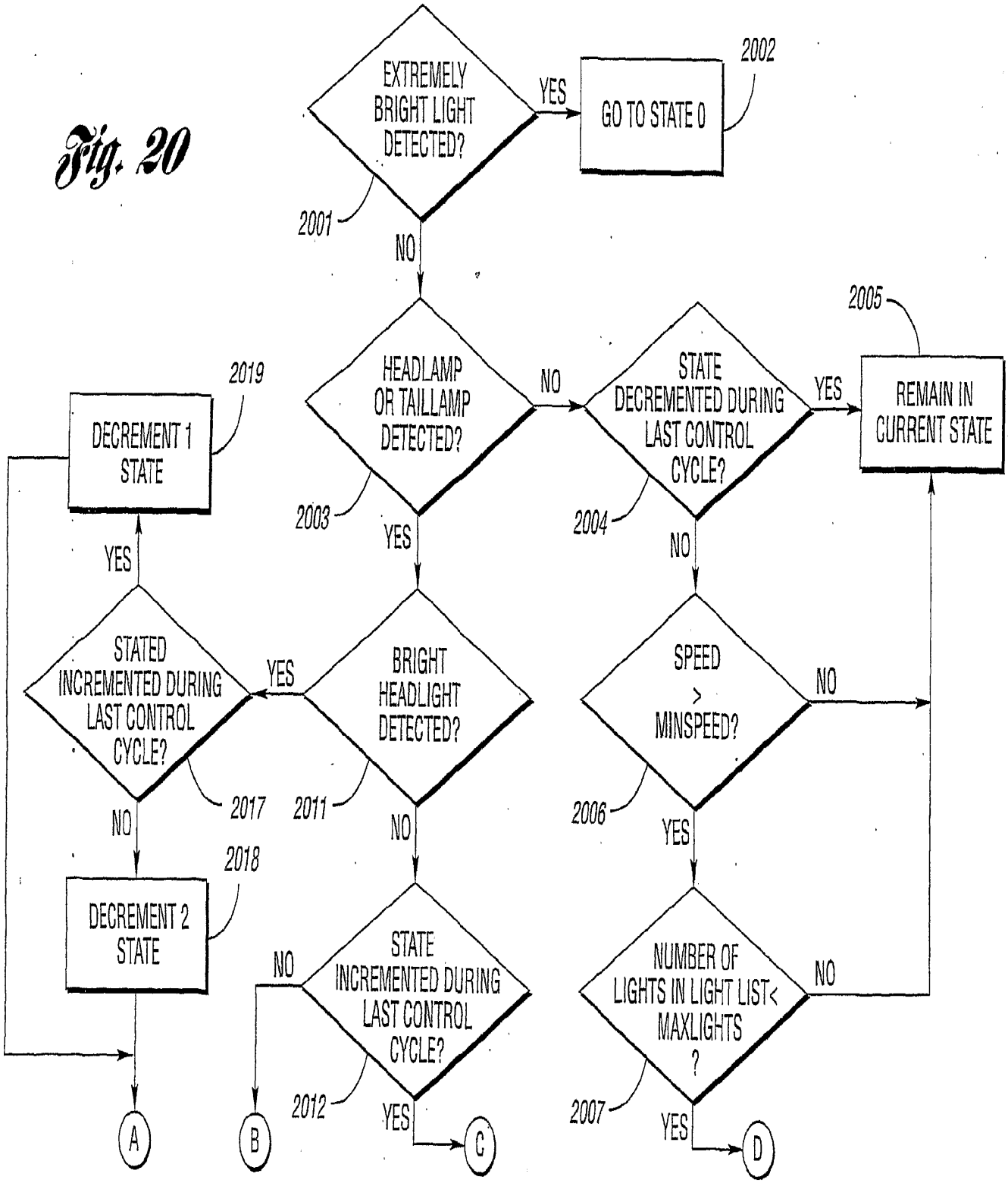

STATE 0, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 0%
STATE 1, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 0%
STATE 2, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 0%
STATE 3, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 10%
STATE 4, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 13%
STATE 5, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 16%
STATE 6, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 20%
STATE 7, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 25%
STATE 8, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 31%
STATE 9, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 39%
STATE 10, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 49%
STATE 11, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 62%
STATE 12, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 77%
STATE 13, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 95%
STATE 14, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 100%
STATE 15, HIGH BEAM DUTY CYCLE = 100%

Fig. 19

Fig. 20


EXTREMELY BRIGHT LIGHT DETECTED?
YES
GO TO STATE 0
2002
2001
NO
HEADLAMP OR TAILLAMP DETECTED?
NO
STATE DECREMENTED DURING LAST CONTROL CYCLE?
YES
REMAIN IN CURRENT STATE
2005
2003
2004
YES
NO
DECREMENT 1 STATE
2019
YES
STATED INCREMENTED DURING LAST CONTROL CYCLE?
YES
BRIGHT HEADLIGHT DETECTED?
SPEED > MINSPEED?
NO
2017
2011
2006
NO
YES
DECREMENT 2 STATE
2018
NO
STATE INCREMENTED DURING LAST CONTROL CYCLE?
NUMBER OF LIGHTS IN LIGHT LIST< MAXLIGHTS ?
NO
2012
2007
YES
YES
A
B
C
D

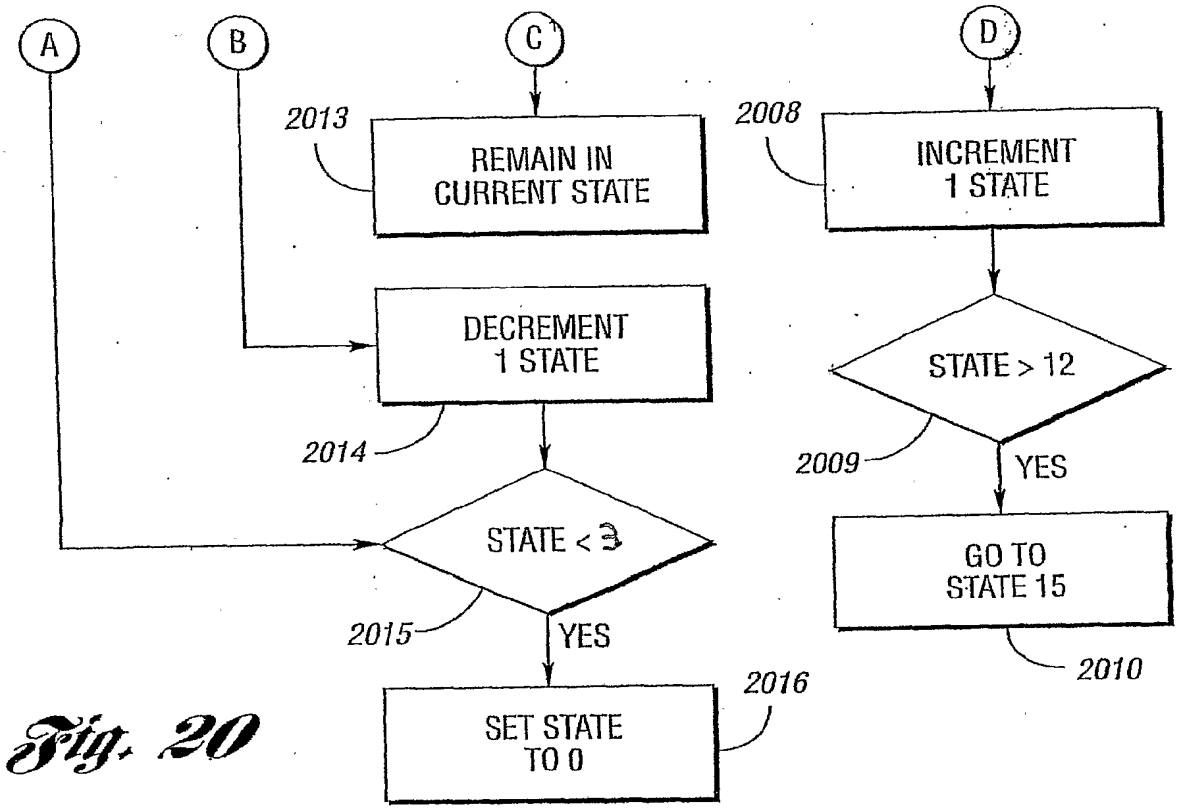

A
B
C
D
2013
REMAIN IN CURRENT STATE
2008
INCREMENT 1 STATE
DECREMENT 1 STATE
STATE > 12
2014
2009
YES
STATE < 3
GO TO STATE 15
2015
YES
2010
2016
SET STATE TO 0

Fig. 20

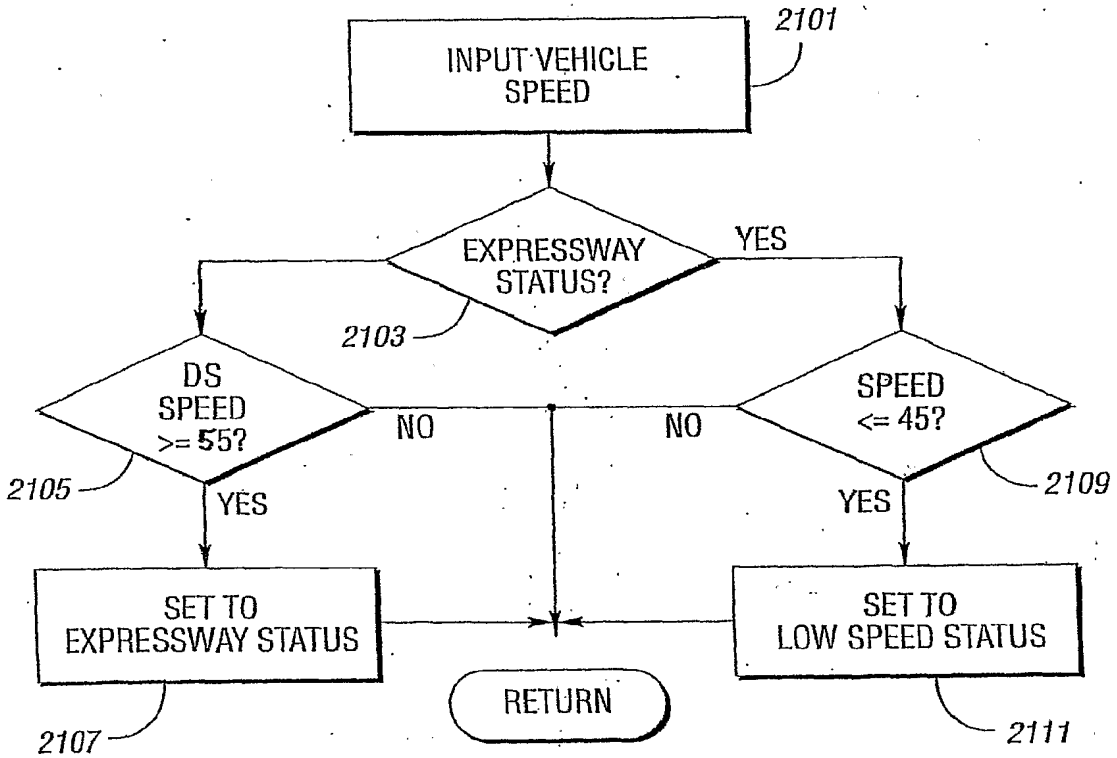

2101
INPUT VEHICLE SPEED
EXPRESSWAY STATUS?
YES
2103
DS SPEED >= 55?
NO
NO
SPEED <= 45?
2105
YES
2109
YES
SET TO EXPRESSWAY STATUS
SET TO LOW SPEED STATUS
RETURN
2107
2111

Fig. 21

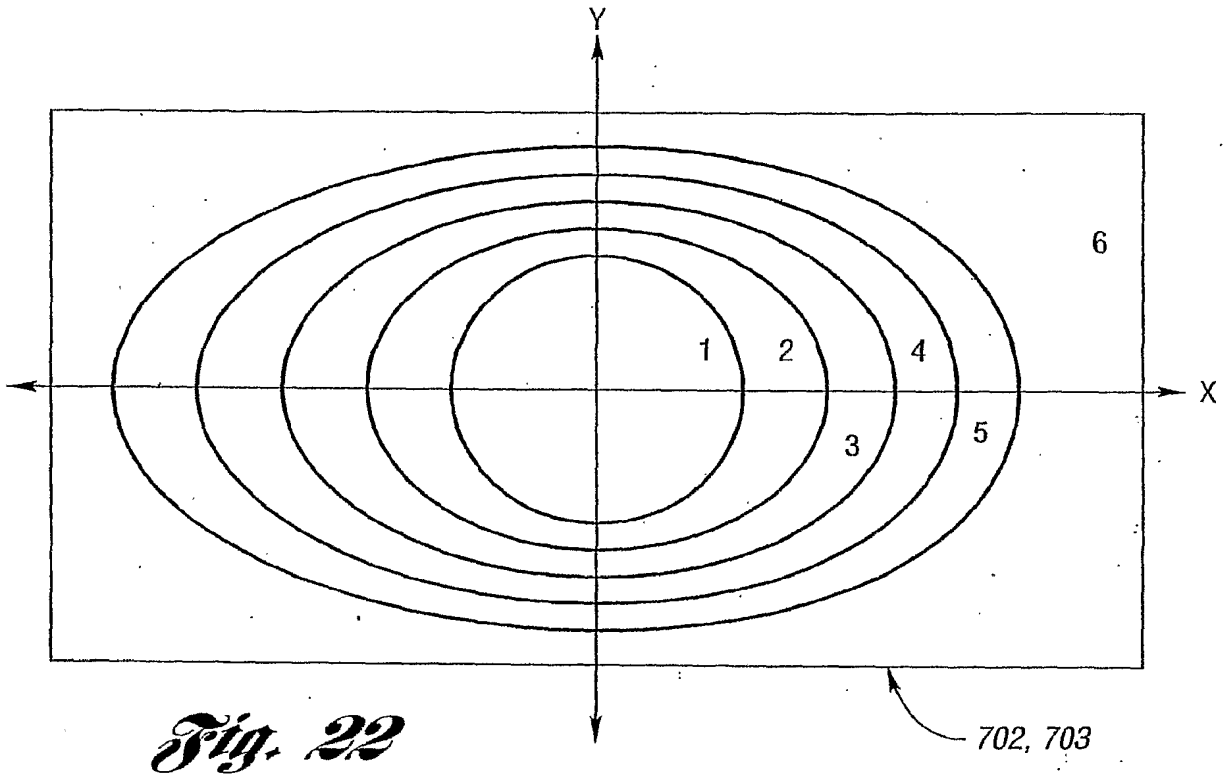

Y
X
1
2
3
4
5
6
702, 703

Fig. 22

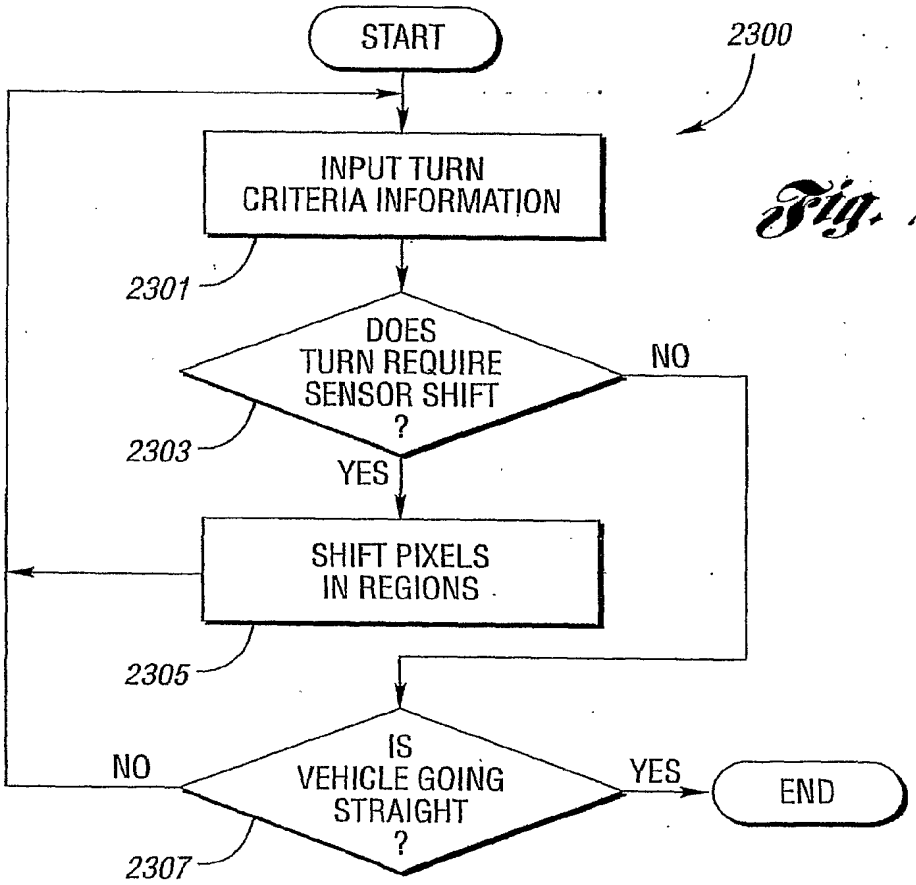
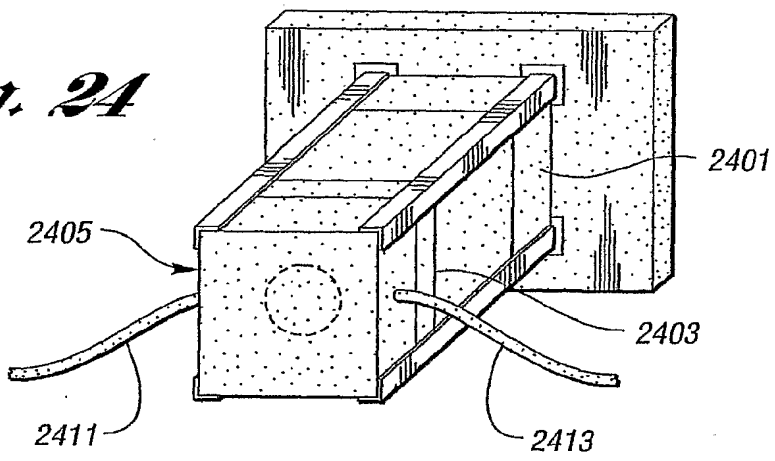

START
2300
INPUT TURN CRITERIA INFORMATION
2301
DOES TURN REQUIRE SENSOR SHIFT ?
2303
NO
YES
SHIFT PIXELS IN REGIONS
2305
IS VEHICLE GOING STRAIGHT ?
2307
NO
YES
END

Fig. 23

Fig. 24



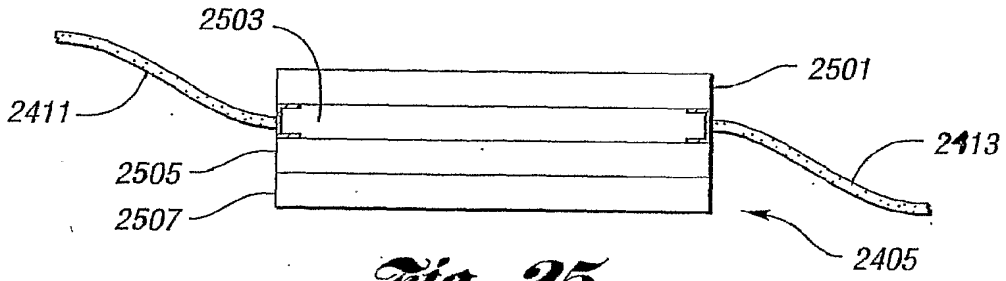
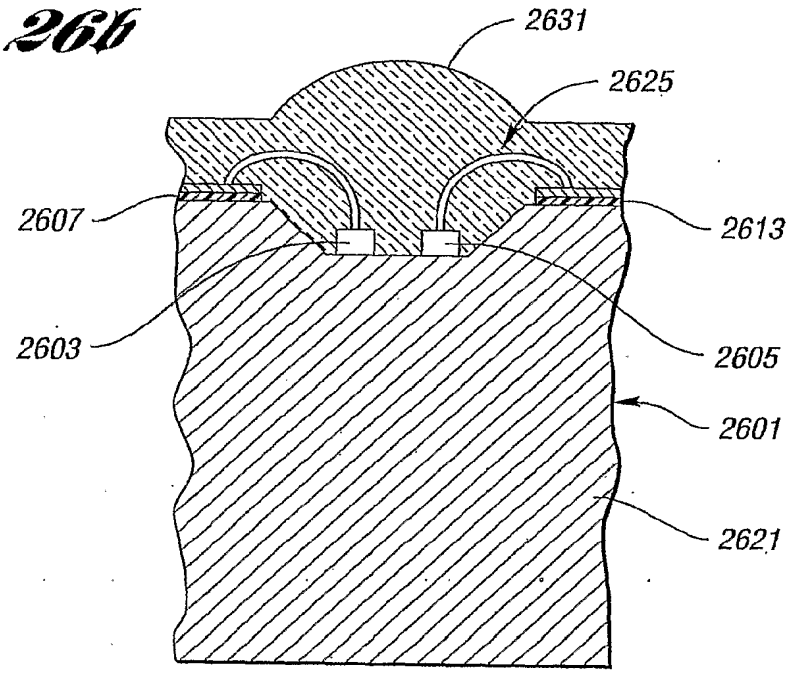


Fig. 25

Fig. 26b



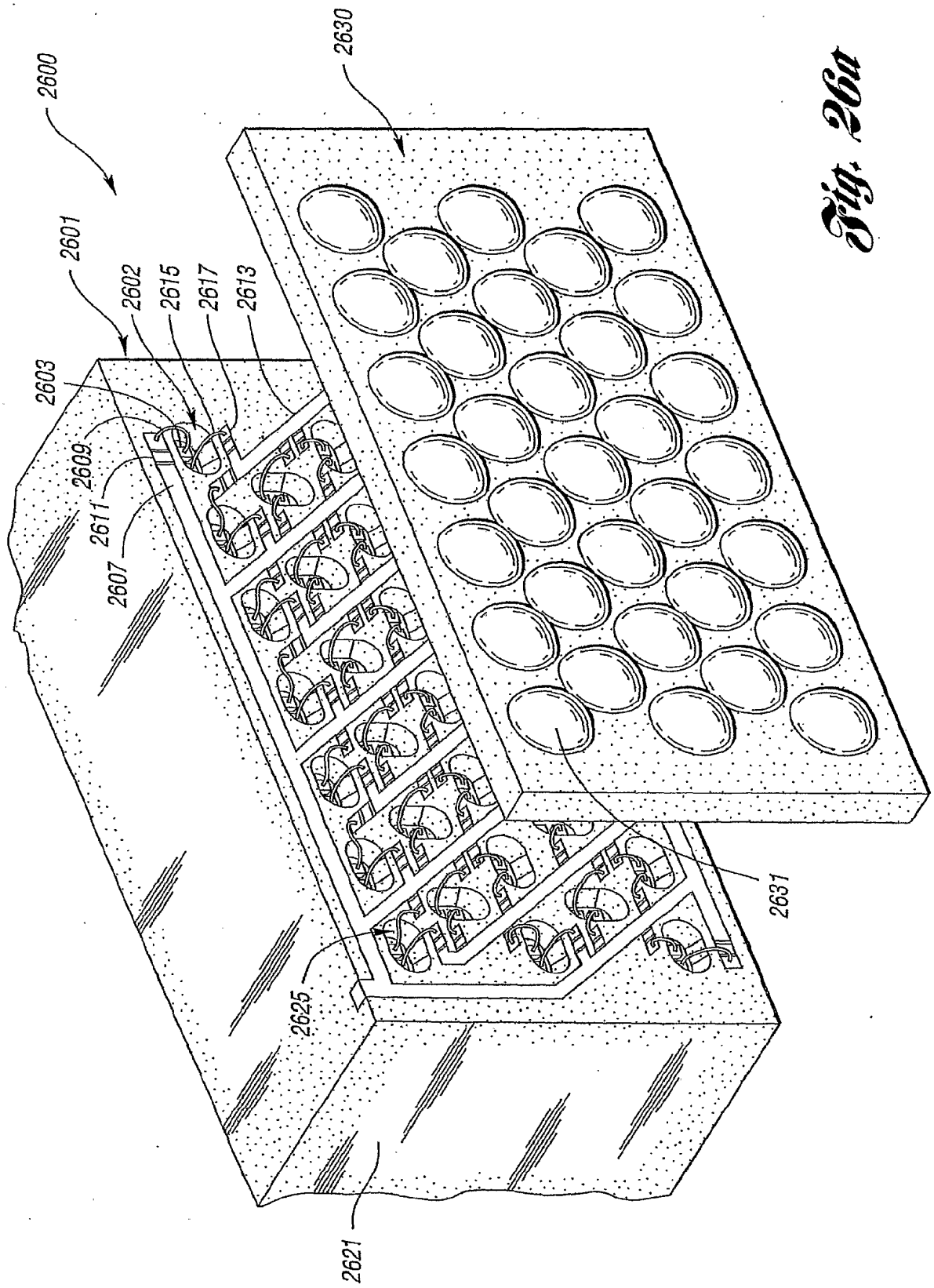

2600
2630
2601
2602
2615
2617
2613
2603
2609
2611
2607
2631
2625
2621

Fig. 26a

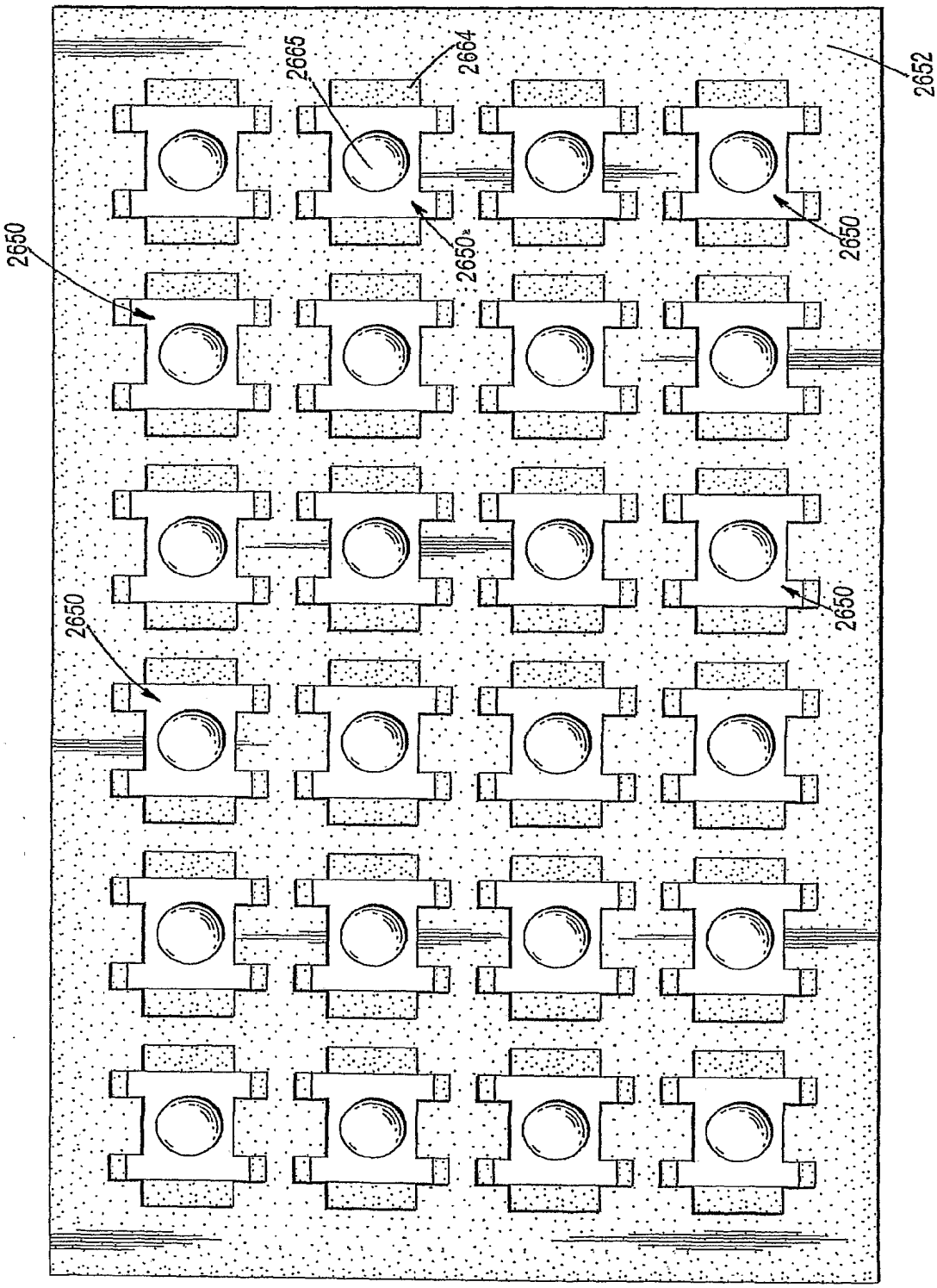


Fig. 26r

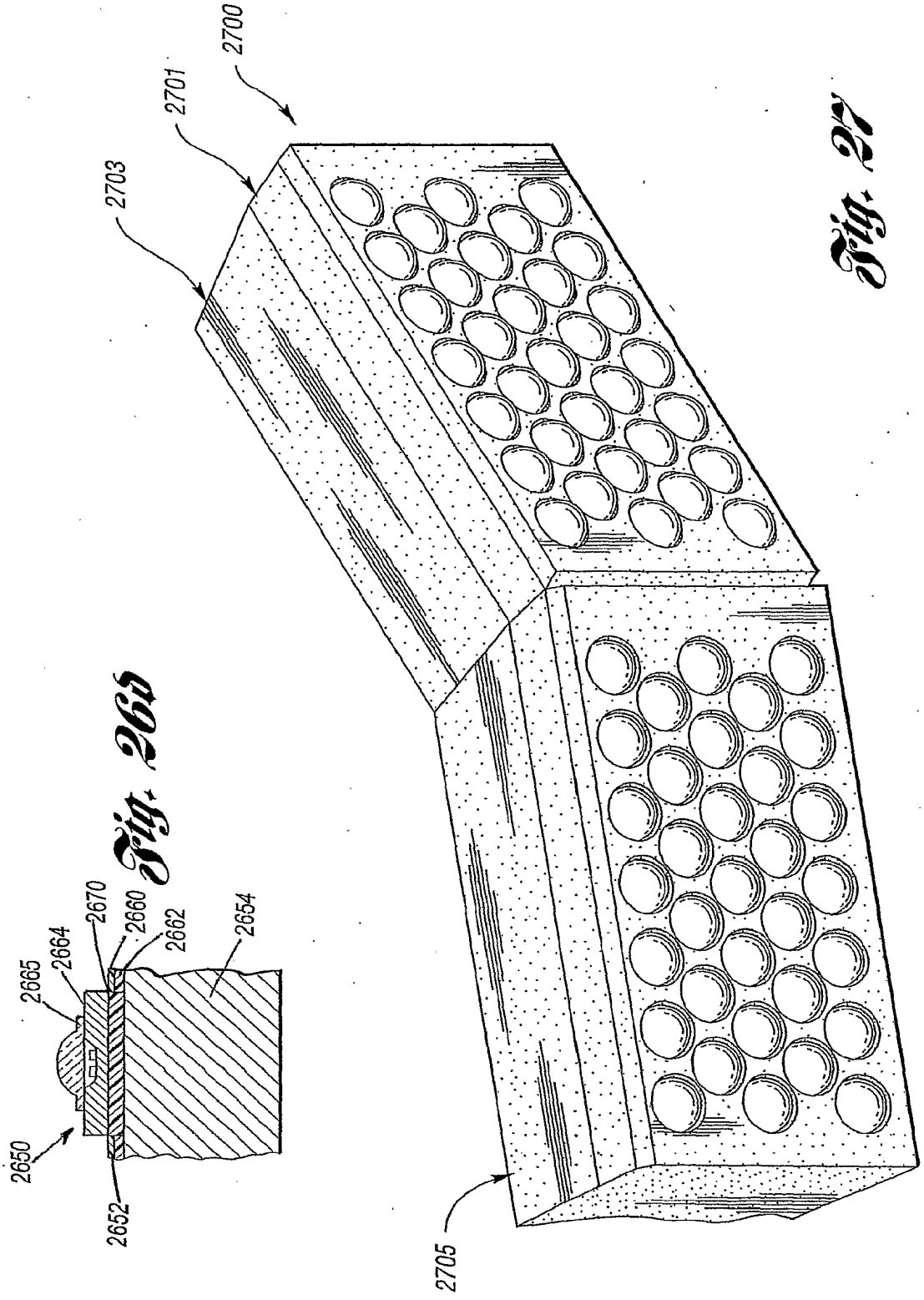


Fig. 27

Fig. 26b

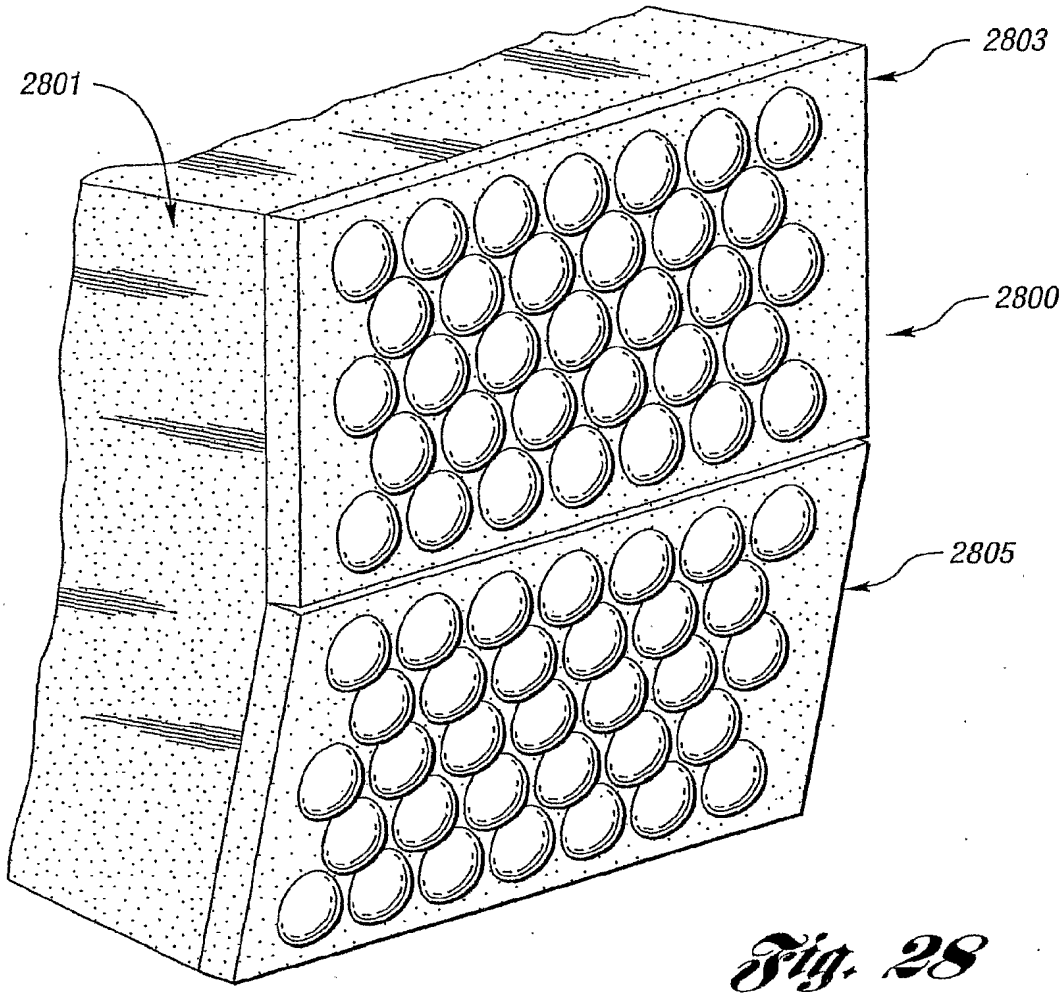

2801
2803
2800
2805

Fig. 28

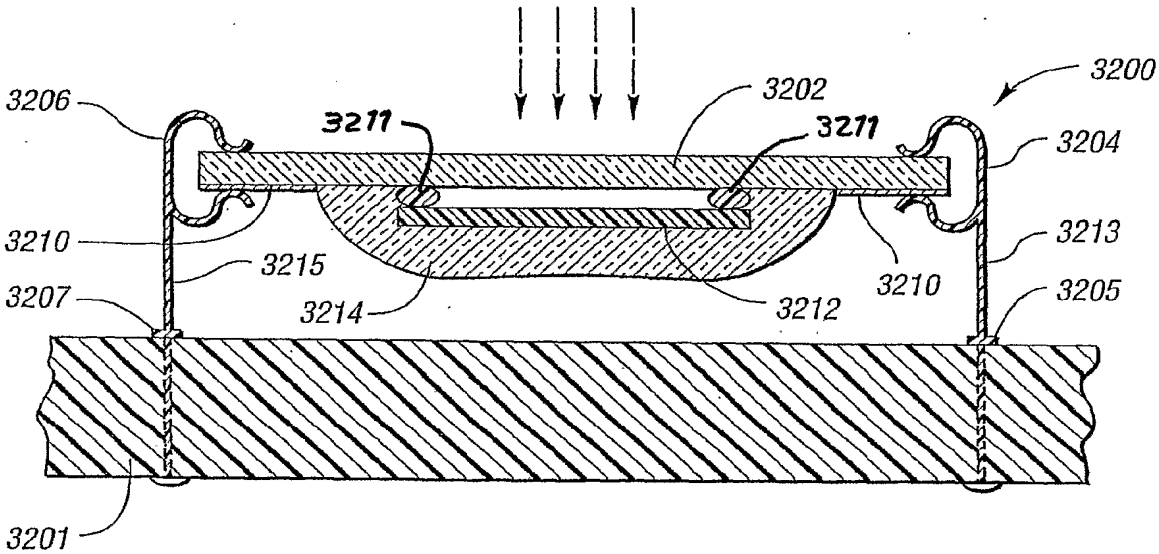

3206
3211
3202
3211
3200
3204
3210
3215
3214
3212
3210
3213
3207
3205
3201

Fig. 32

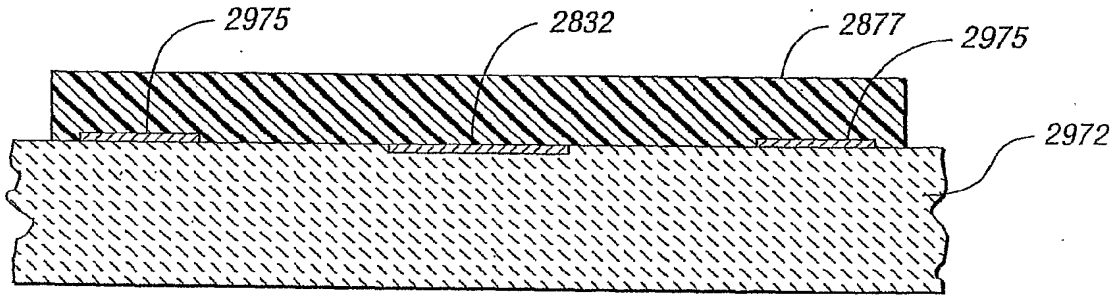


Fig. 29a

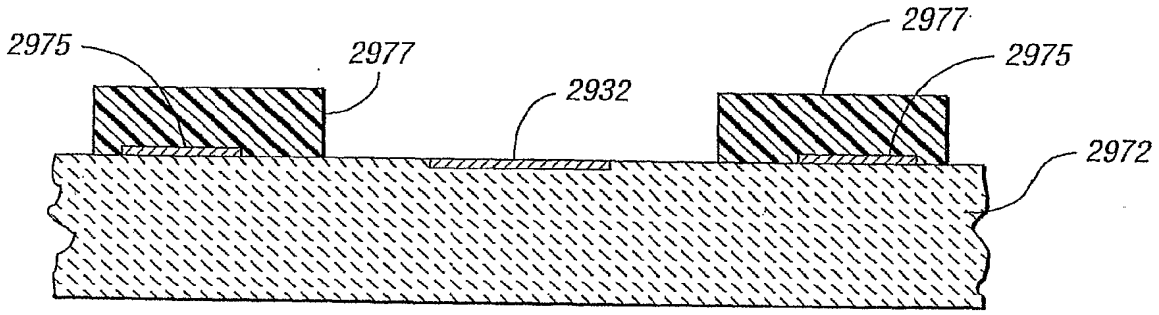


Fig. 29b

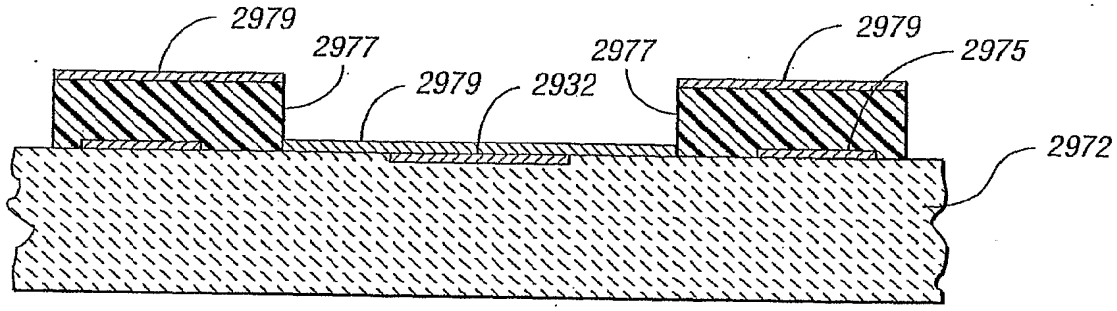


Fig. 29c

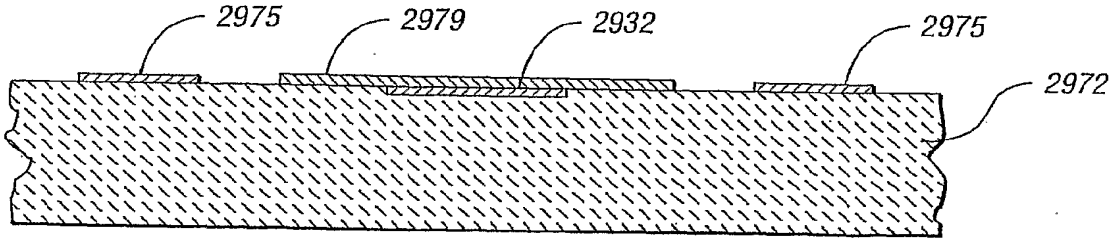


Fig. 29d

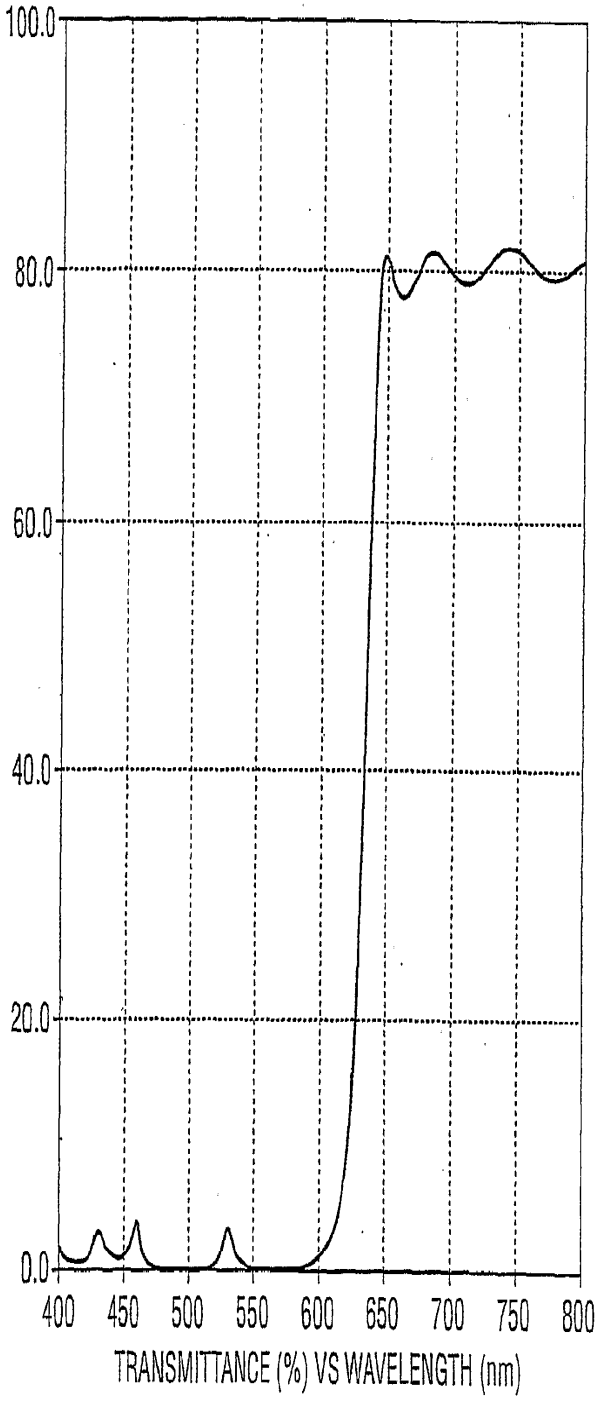

100.0
80.0
60.0
40.0
20.0
0.0
400 450 500 550 600 650 700 750 800
TRANSMITTANCE (%) VS WAVELENGTH (nm)

Fig. 30

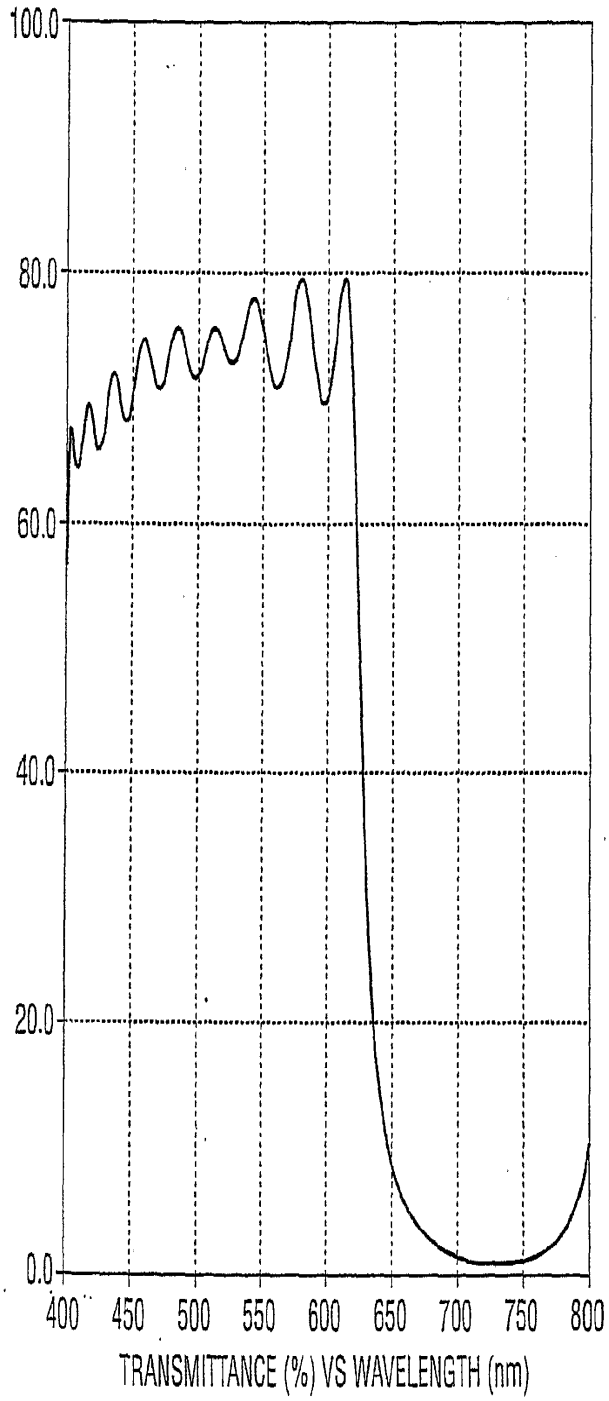

100.0
80.0
60.0
40.0
20.0
0.0
400 450 500 550 600 650 700 750 800
TRANSMITTANCE (%) VS WAVELENGTH (nm)

Fig. 31

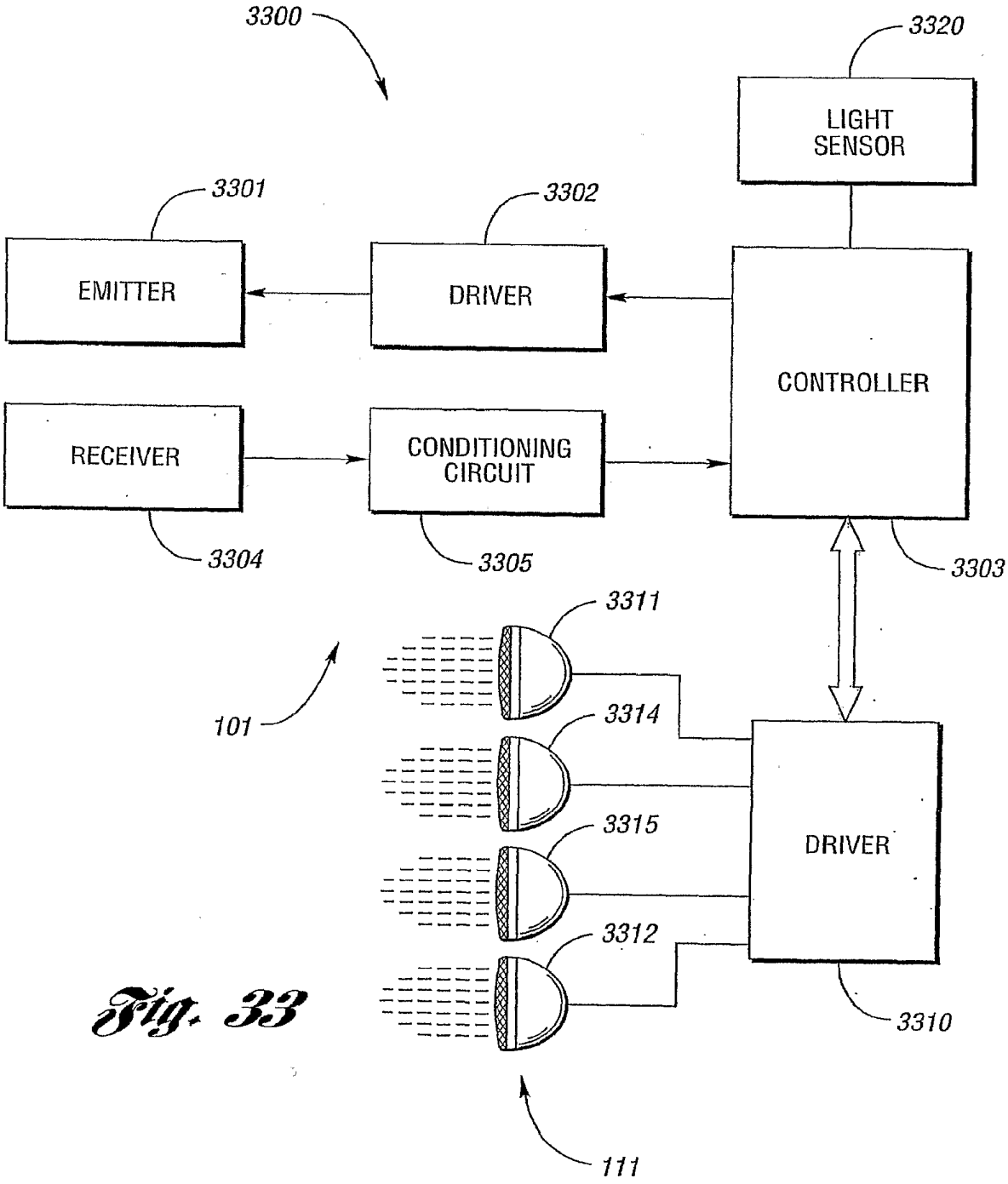

3300
3320
LIGHT SENSOR
3301
3302
EMITTER
DRIVER
CONTROLLER
RECEIVER
CONDITIONING CIRCUIT
3304
3305
3303
3311
101
3314
3315
DRIVER
3312
3310
111

Fig. 33

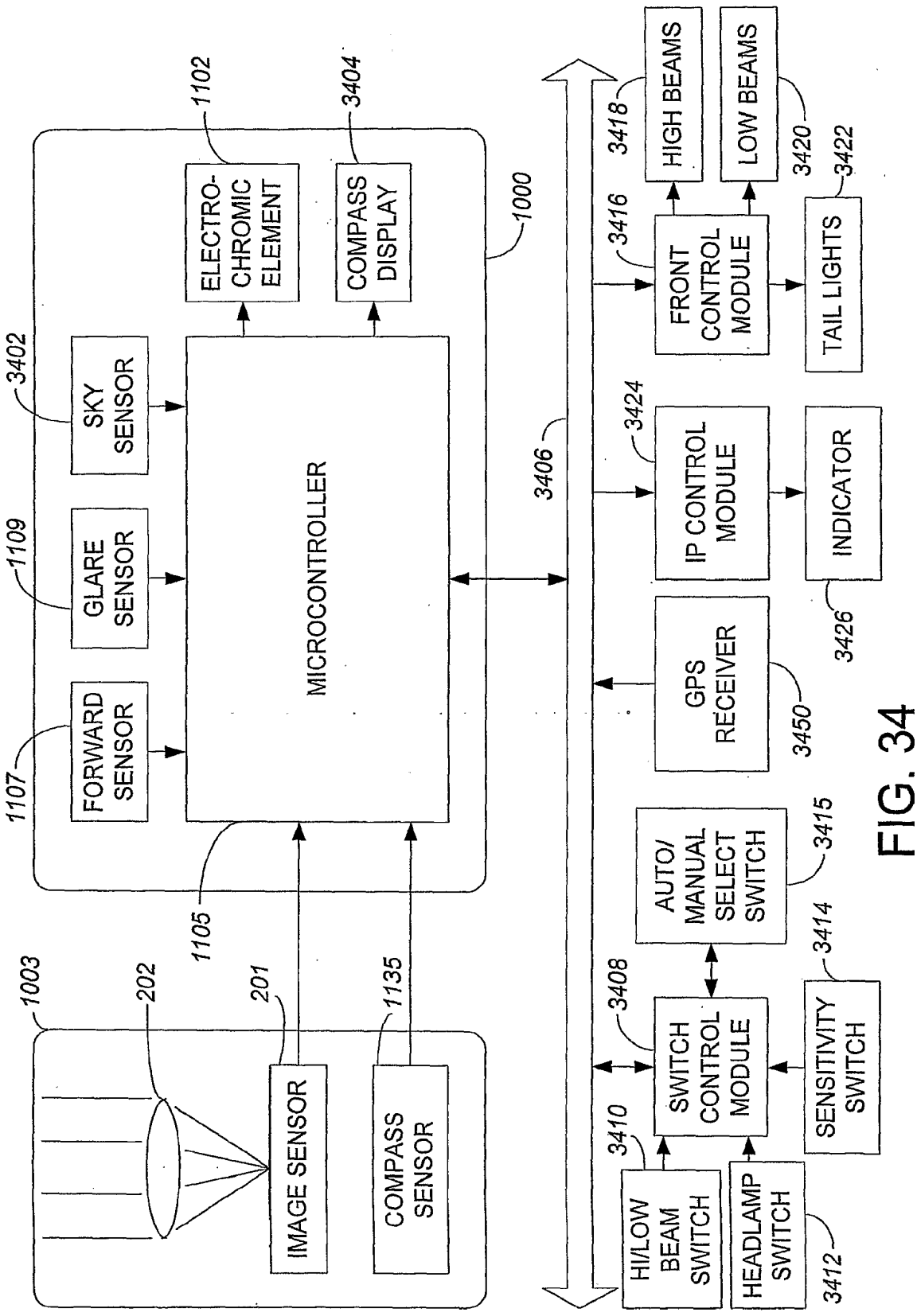

1102
3404
ELECTRO-CHROMIC ELEMENT
COMPASS DISPLAY
1000
3402
SKY SENSOR
1109
GLARE SENSOR
1107
FORWARD SENSOR
MICROCONTROLLER
3406
1105
1003
202
201
1135
IMAGE SENSOR
COMPASS SENSOR
3418
HIGH BEAMS
3420
LOW BEAMS
3422
TAIL LIGHTS
3416
FRONT CONTROL MODULE
3424
IP CONTROL MODULE
INDICATOR
3426
GPS RECEIVER
3450
AUTO/ MANUAL SELECT SWITCH
3415
3408
SWITCH CONTROL MODULE
3414
SENSITIVITY SWITCH
3410
HI/LOW BEAM SWITCH
HEADLAMP SWITCH
3412

FIG. 34

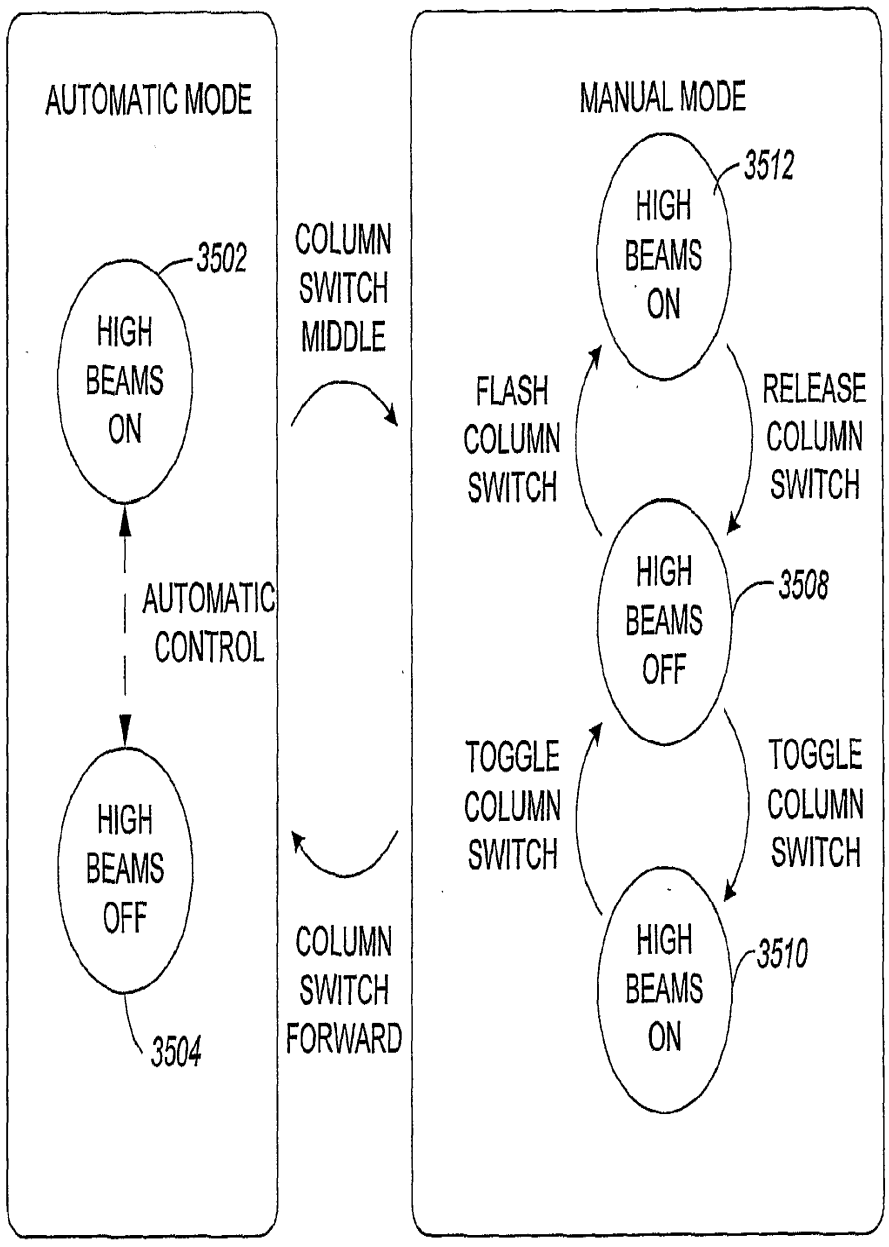

AUTOMATIC MODE
3502
HIGH BEAMS ON
AUTOMATIC CONTROL
HIGH BEAMS OFF
3504
COLUMN SWITCH MIDDLE
COLUMN SWITCH FORWARD
MANUAL MODE
3512
HIGH BEAMS ON
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
RELEASE COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS OFF
3508
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS ON
3510

FIG. 35

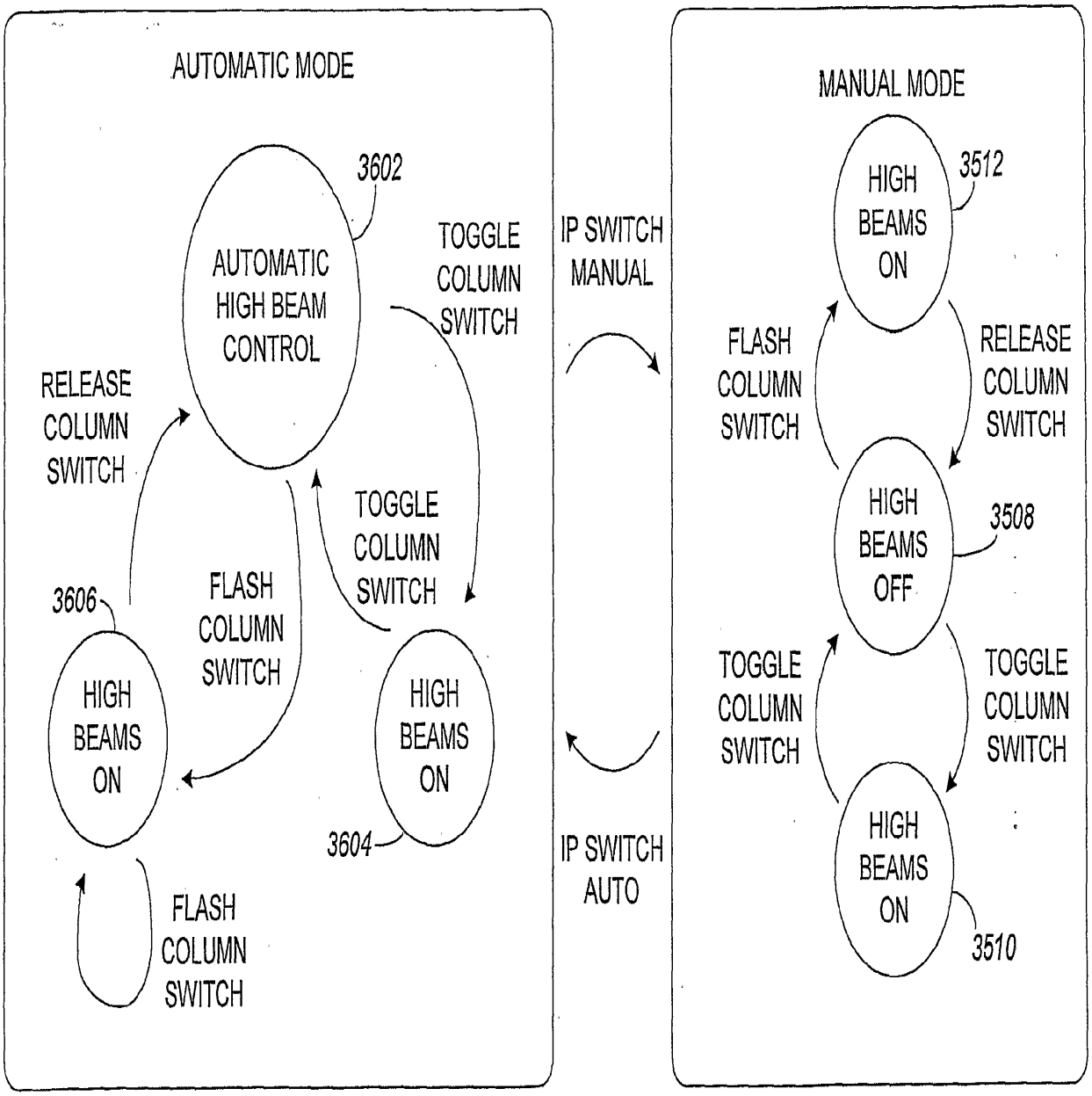

AUTOMATIC MODE
3602
AUTOMATIC HIGH BEAM CONTROL
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
RELEASE COLUMN SWITCH
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
3606
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS ON
HIGH BEAMS ON
3604
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
IP SWITCH MANUAL
IP SWITCH AUTO
MANUAL MODE
HIGH BEAMS ON
3512
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
RELEASE COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS OFF
3508
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS ON
3510

FIG. 36

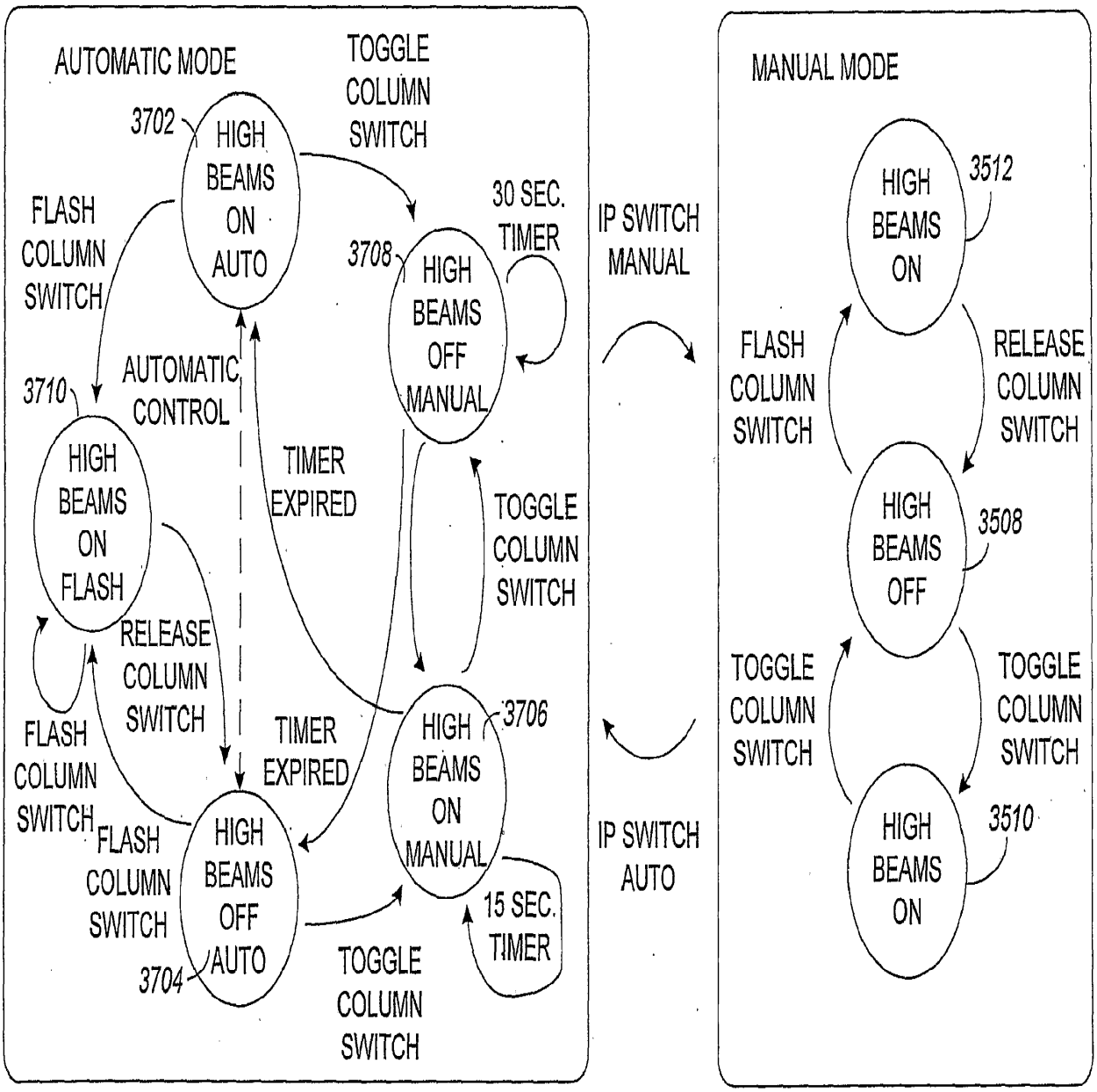

AUTOMATIC MODE
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
3702
HIGH BEAMS ON AUTO
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
30 SEC. TIMER
3708
HIGH BEAMS OFF MANUAL
IP SWITCH MANUAL
3710
AUTOMATIC CONTROL
HIGH BEAMS ON FLASH
TIMER EXPIRED
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
RELEASE COLUMN SWITCH
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
TIMER EXPIRED
3706
HIGH BEAMS ON MANUAL
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS OFF AUTO
IP SWITCH AUTO
15 SEC. TIMER
3704
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
MANUAL MODE
3512
HIGH BEAMS ON
FLASH COLUMN SWITCH
RELEASE COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS OFF
3508
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
TOGGLE COLUMN SWITCH
HIGH BEAMS ON
3510

FIG. 37

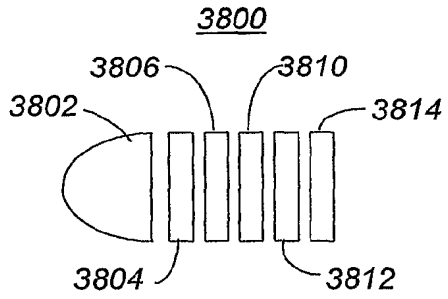


FIG. 38

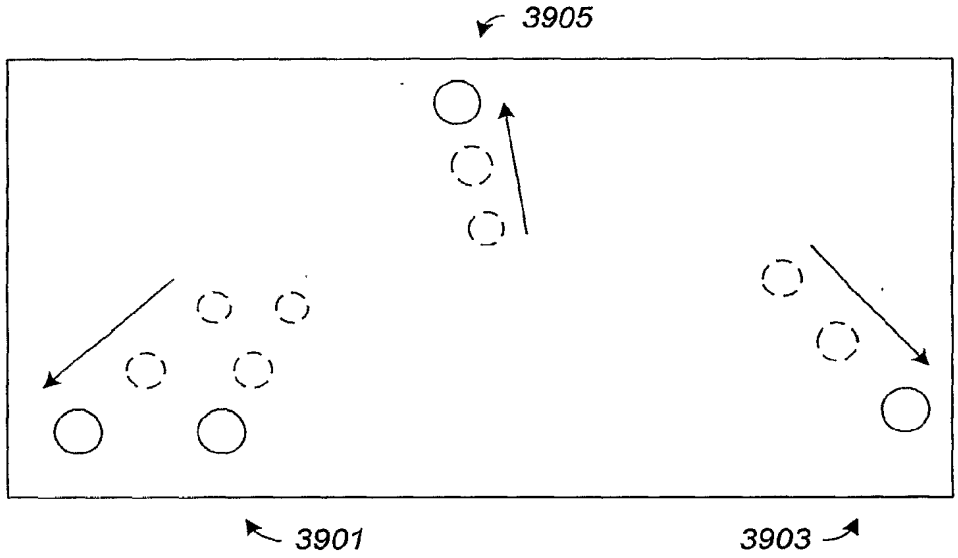


FIG. 39

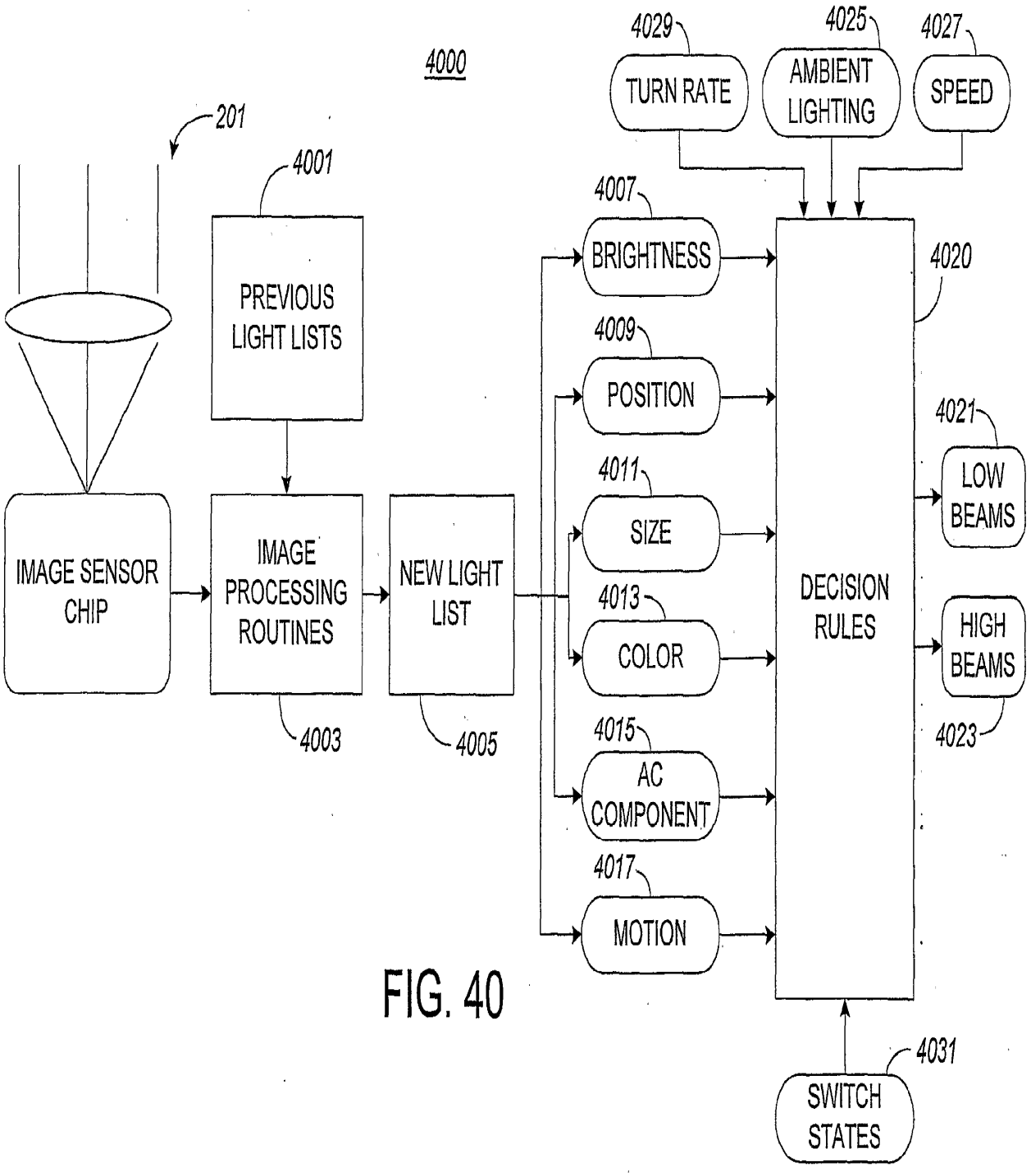

4000
201
4001
PREVIOUS LIGHT LISTS
IMAGE SENSOR CHIP
IMAGE PROCESSING ROUTINES
NEW LIGHT LIST
4003
4005
4029
TURN RATE
4025
AMBIENT LIGHTING
4027
SPEED
4007
BRIGHTNESS
4009
POSITION
4011
SIZE
4013
COLOR
4015
AC COMPONENT
4017
MOTION
4020
DECISION RULES
4021
LOW BEAMS
HIGH BEAMS
4023
4031
SWITCH STATES

FIG. 40

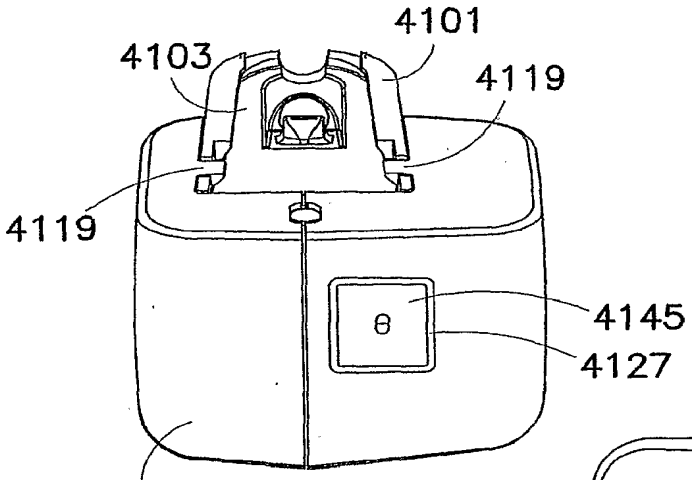


FIG. 41

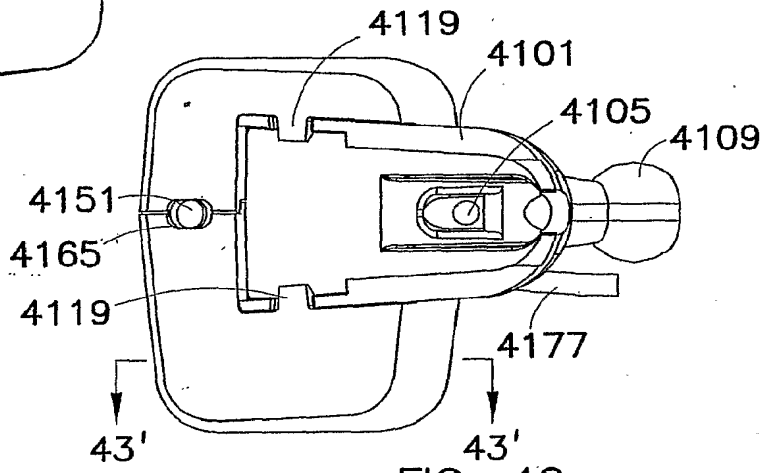


FIG. 42

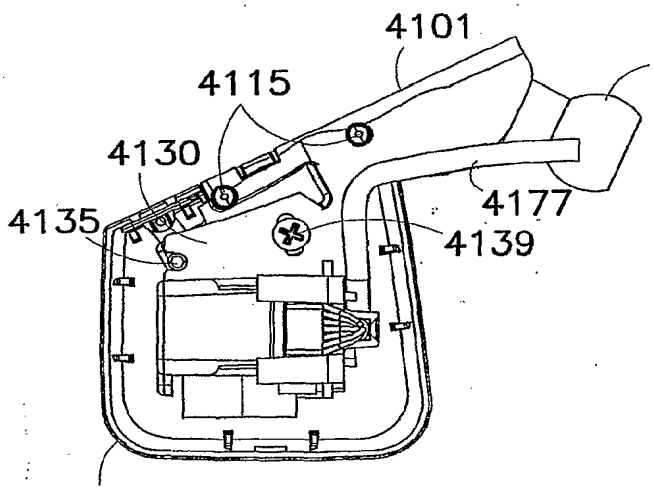


FIG. 43

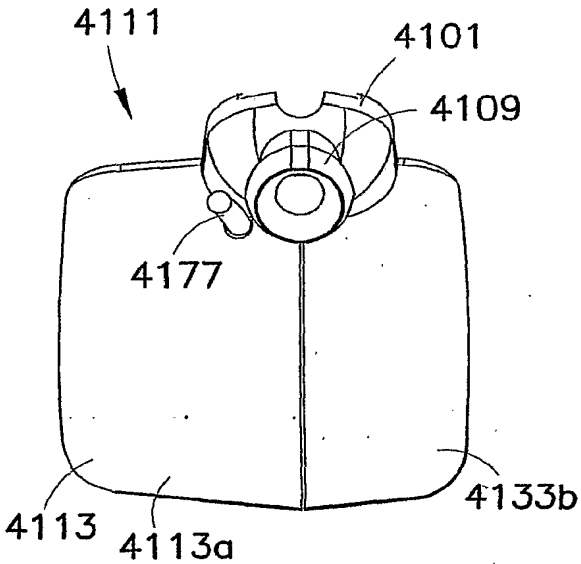


FIG. 45

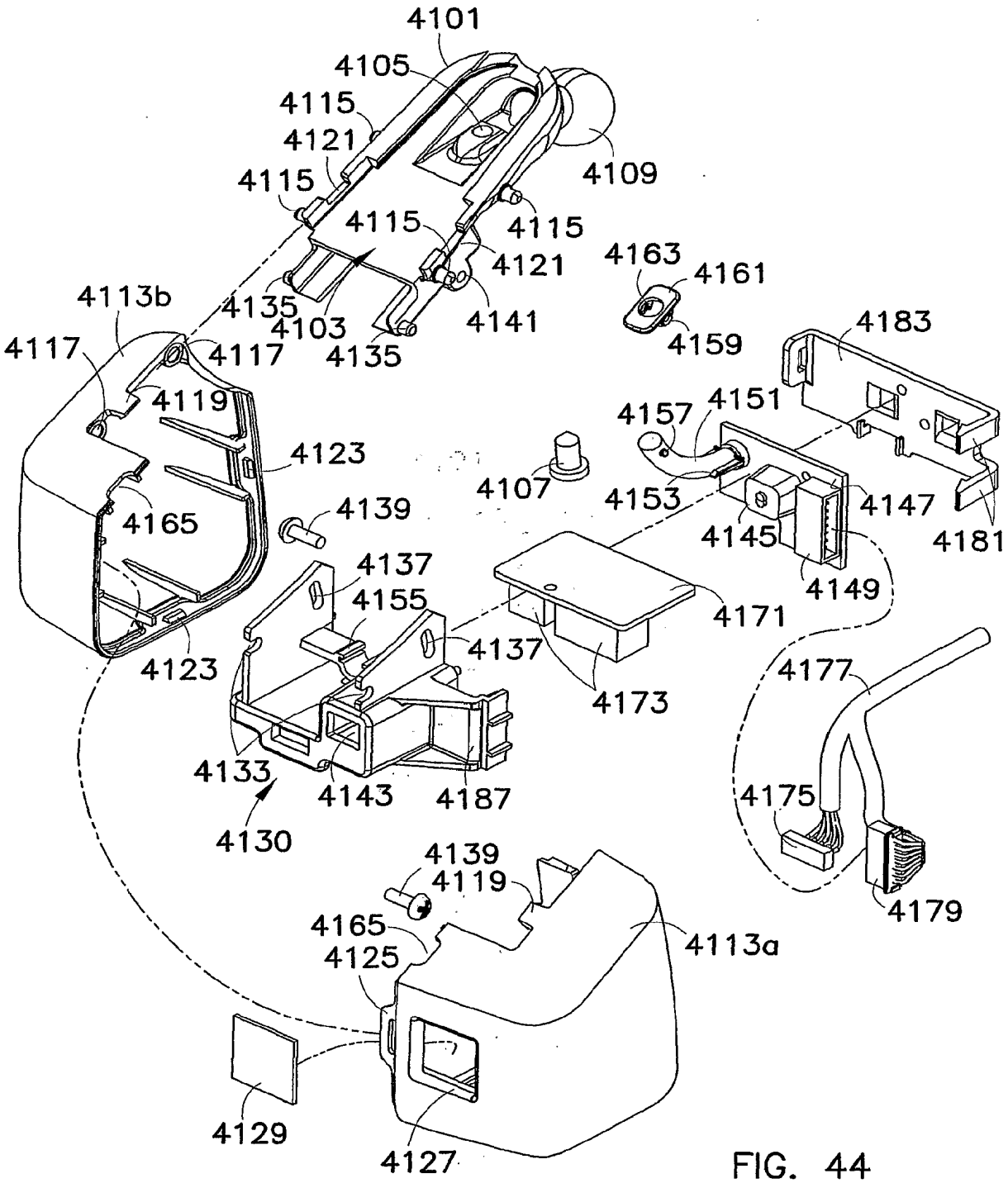

4101
4105
4115
4121
4115
4109
4115
4115
4121
4163
4161
4135
4103
4141
4159
4113b
4117
4117
4135
4183
4119
4157
4151
4123
4107
4153
4147
4139
4165
4145
4181
4137
4155
4149
4171
4137
4123
4177
4173
4133
4143
4187
4175
4130
4139
4119
4165
4113a
4125
4179
4129
4127

FIG. 44

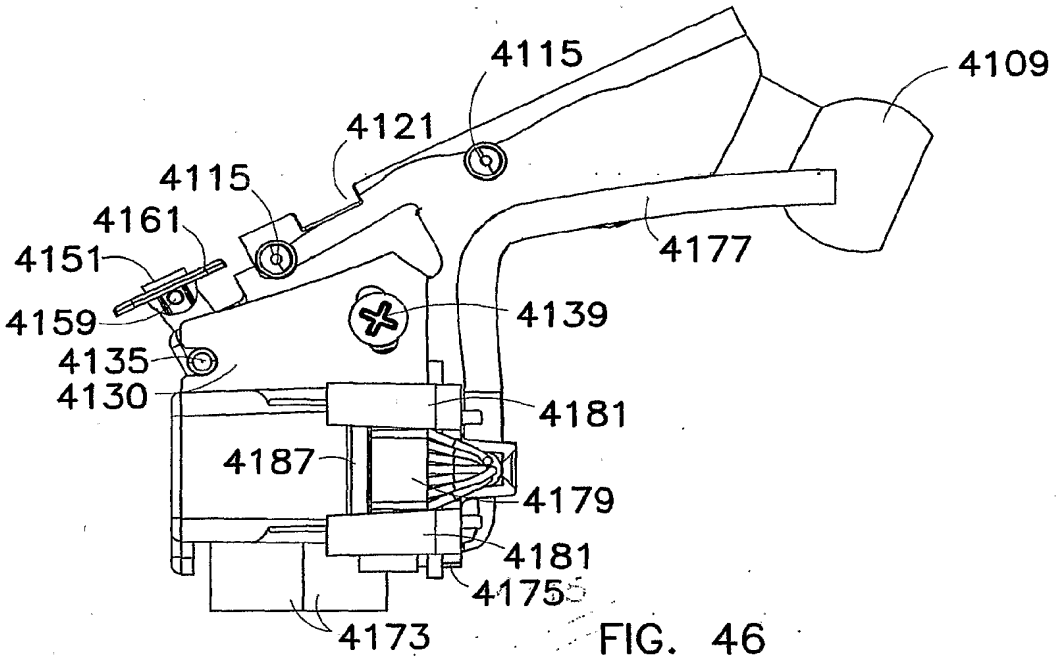

4115
4109
4121
4115
4161
4151
4177
4159
4139
4135
4130
4181
4187
4179
4181
4175
4173

FIG. 46

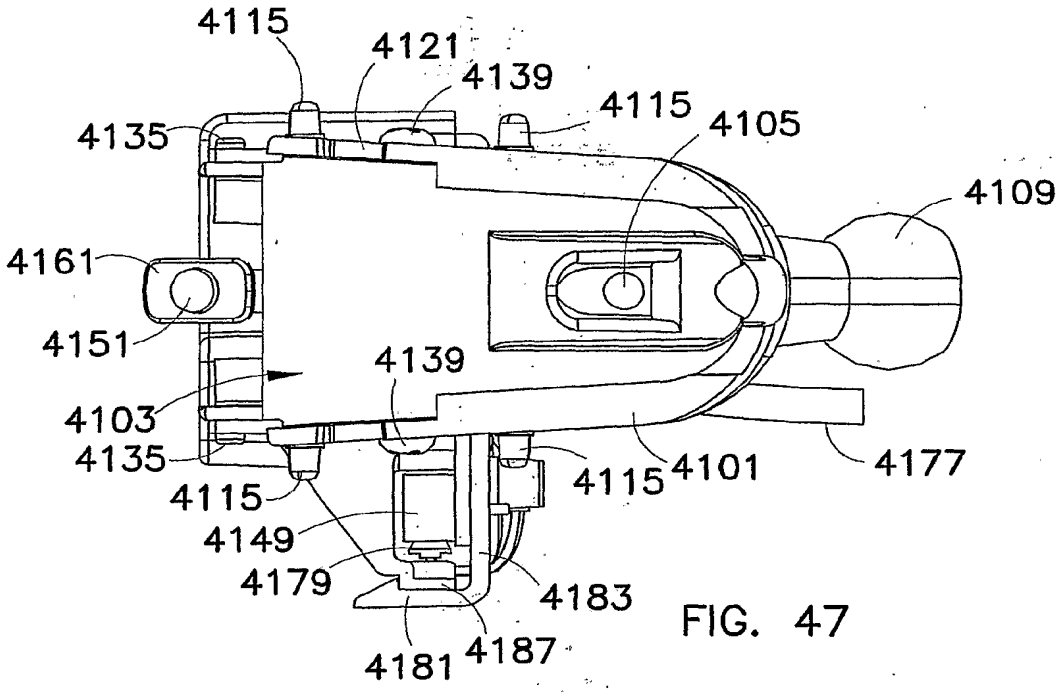

4115
4121
4139
4135
4115
4105
4109
4161
4151
4139
4103
4135
4115
4101
4177
4115
4149
4179
4183
4181
4187

FIG. 47

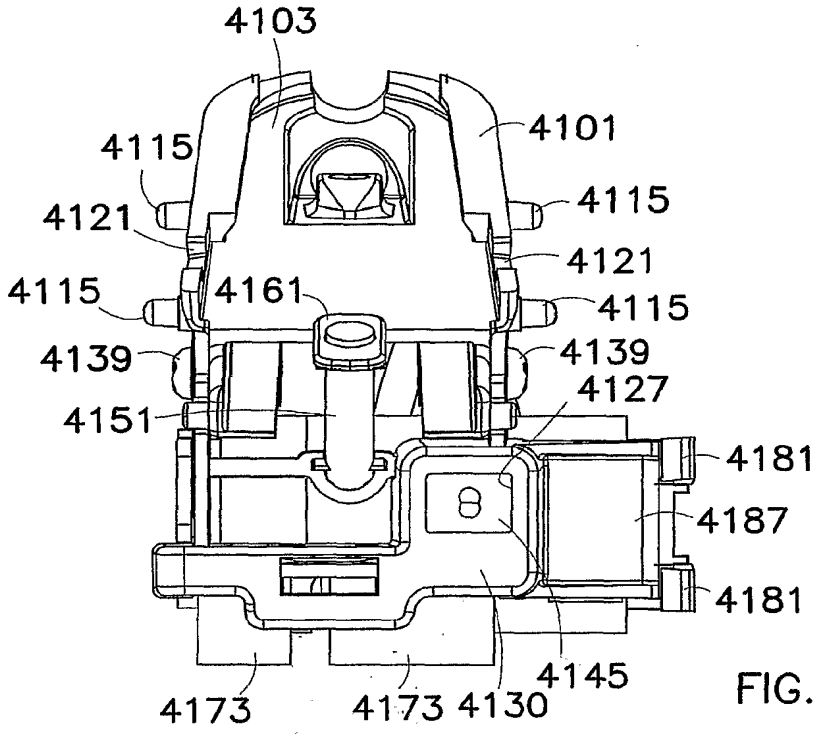

4103
4101
4115
4115
4121
4121
4115
4161
4115
4139
4139
4127
4151
4181
4187
4181
4145
4173
4173
4130

FIG. 48

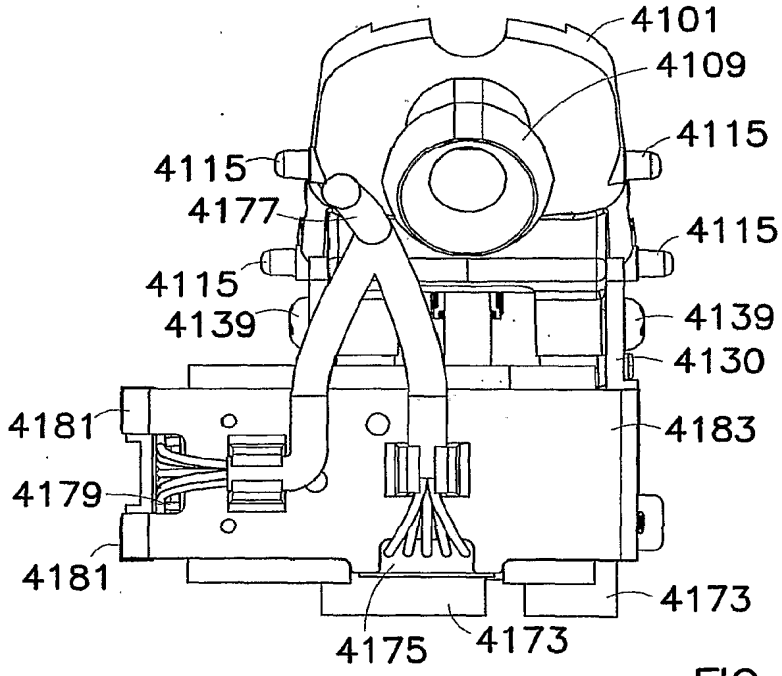

4101
4109
4115
4115
4177
4115
4115
4139
4139
4130
4181
4183
4179
4181
4173
4175
4173

FIG. 49

FIG. 50A

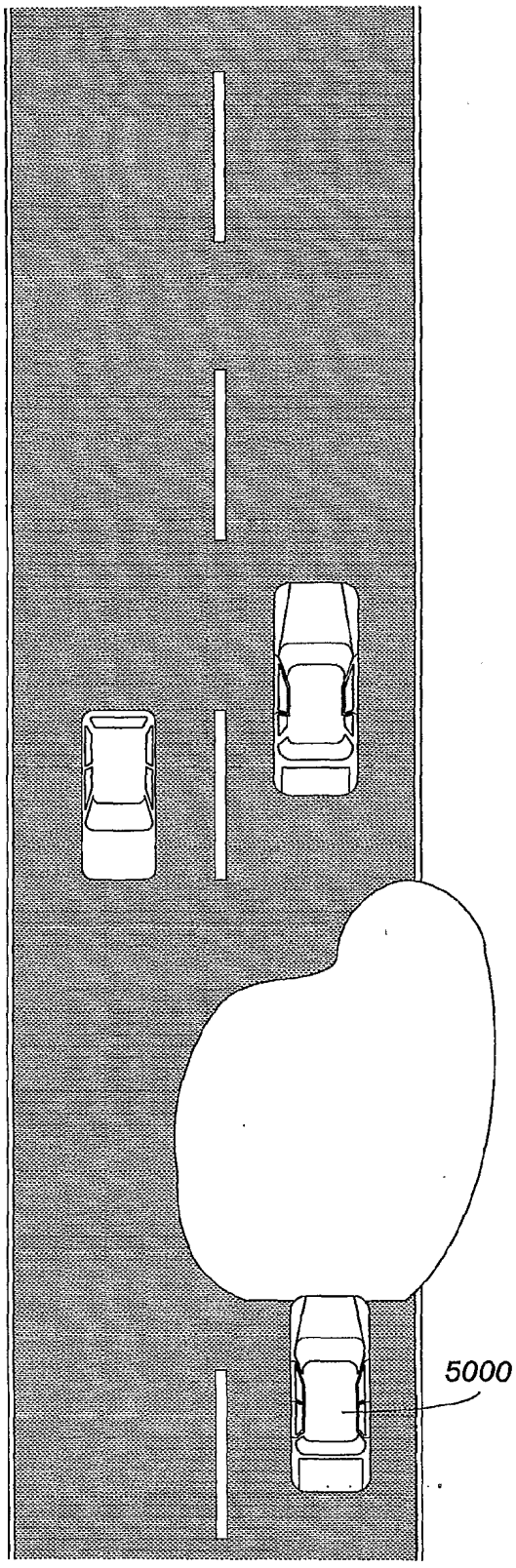


FIG. 50B

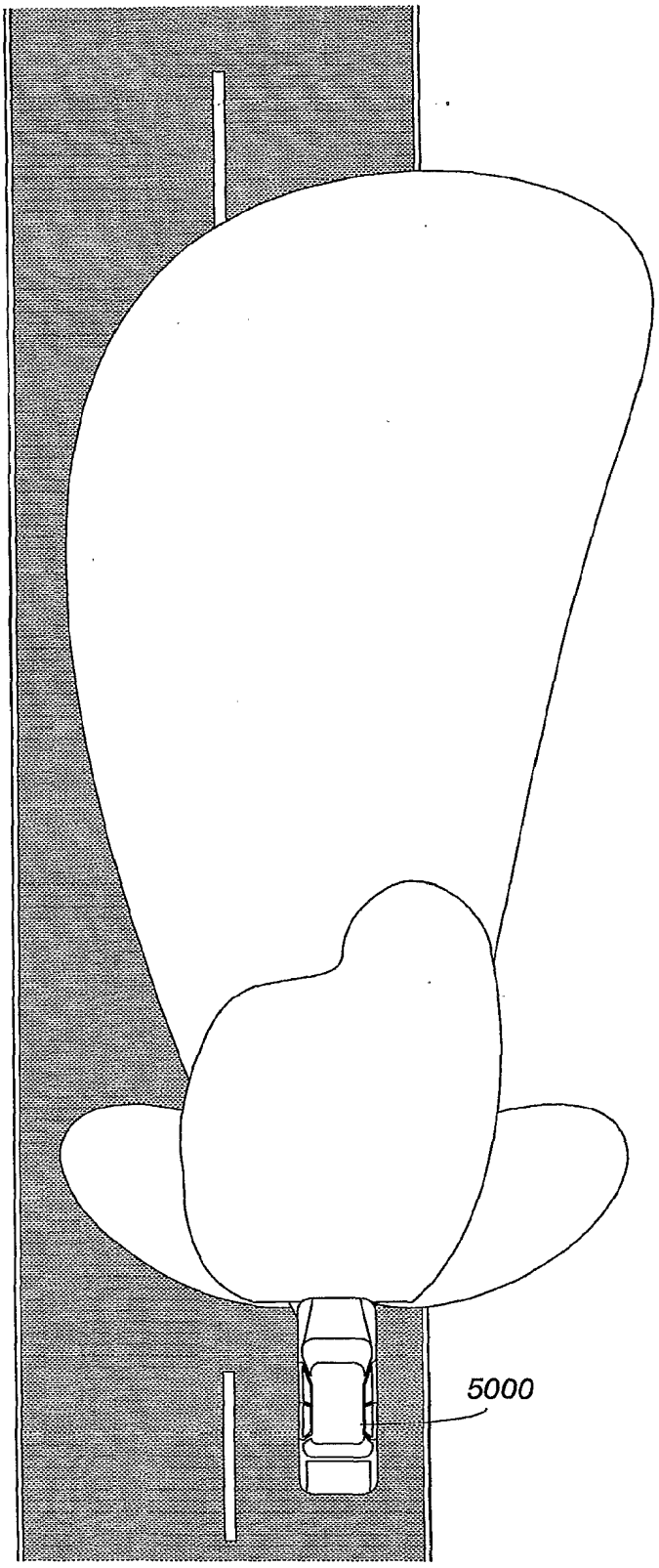


FIG. 50C

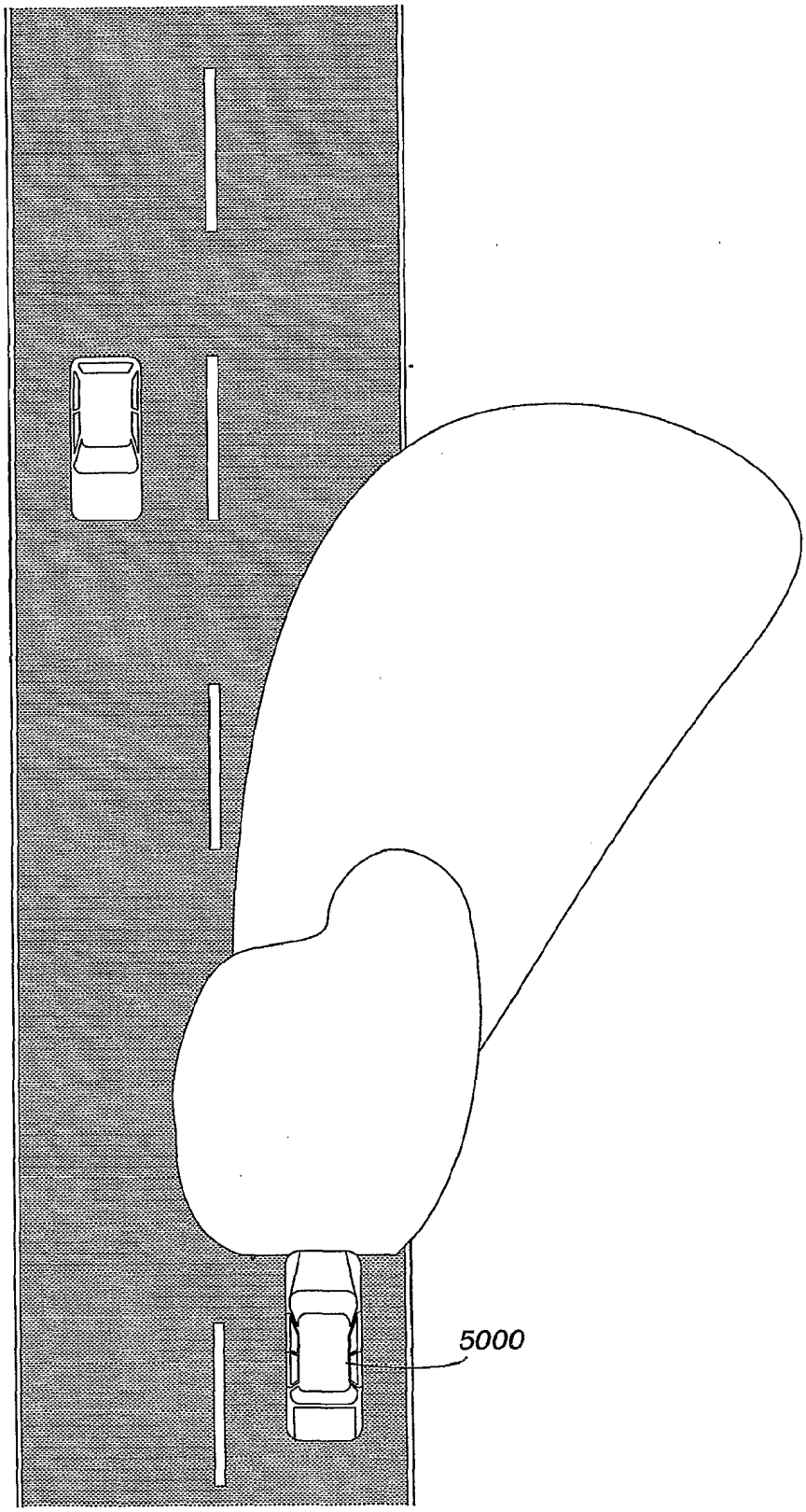


Exhibit PA-B
U.S. Patent No. 6,406,172
Harbers et al.

US006406172B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Harbers et al.

(10) **Patent No.: US 6,406,172 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent: Jun. 18, 2002**

(54) **HEADLAMP AND DYNAMIC LIGHTING SYSTEM FOR VEHICLES**

(75) Inventors: **Gerard Harbers**; **Simon H. A. Begemann**, both of Eindhoven (NL)

(73) Assignee: **Koninklijke Philips Electronics N.V.** (NL)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **09/599,792**

(22) Filed: **Jun. 22, 2000**

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Jun. 25, 1999 (EP) 99202054

(51) **Int. Cl.**[7] **F21V 29/00**
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **362/544**; 362/545; 362/230; 362/231; 362/464
(58) **Field of Search** 362/544, 545, 362/230, 231, 251, 464, 466

(56) **References Cited**

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5,136,483 A * 8/1992 Schoniger et al. 362/545
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5,685,637 A 11/1997 Chapman et al. 362/263
5,798,911 A * 8/1998 Josic 362/466
5,876,113 A * 3/1999 Gotoh 362/466
5,931,572 A * 8/1999 Gotoh 362/466
6,220,722 B1 * 4/2001 Begemann 362/231
6,234,648 B1 * 5/2001 Borner et al. 362/235

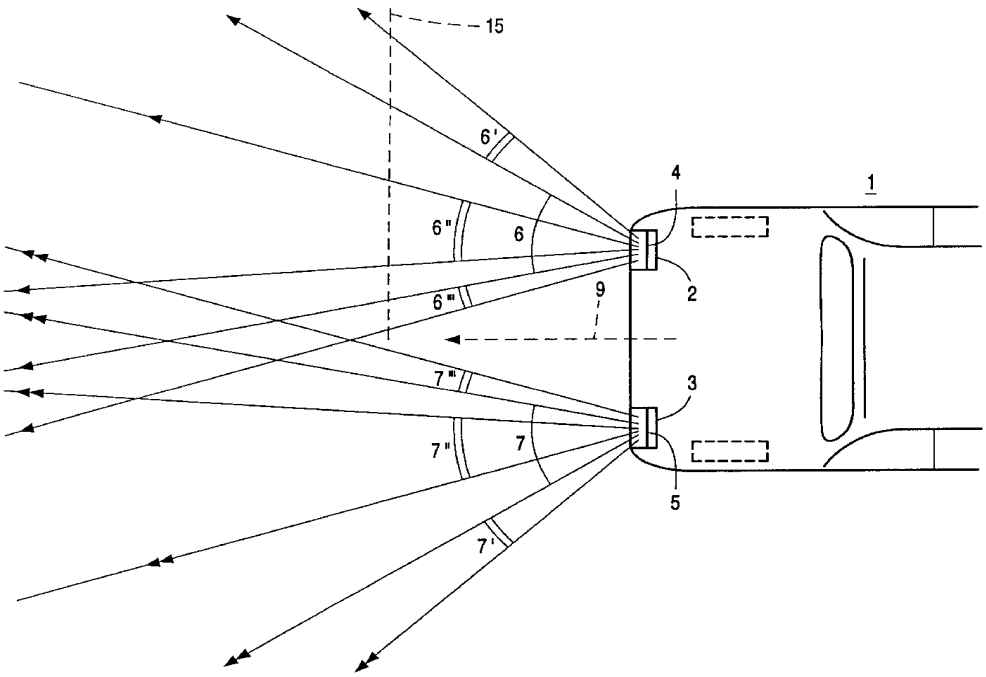
* cited by examiner

Primary Examiner—Sandra O'Shea
Assistant Examiner—Ronald E. DelGizzi
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Dicran Halajian

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A headlamp (**2**; **3**) of a vehicle (**1**) has a light source (**4**; **5**) comprising a plurality of opto-electronic elements (**11**; **12**; **13**; **14**), preferably light-emitting diodes (LEDs). At least one of these opto-electronic elements (**11**; **12**; **13**; **14**) has, in operation, a luminous flux of 5 lm or higher. According to the invention, the spatial distribution of the light beam (**6**, **6'**, . . . ; **7**, **7'**, . . .) generated by the light source (**4**; **5**) is continuously adjustable. Preferably, the light source (**4**; **5**) comprises opto-electronic elements (**11**; **12**; **13**; **14**) only. Preferably, the spatial distribution is influenced by the speed of the vehicle (**1**), the rotational position of the steering wheel of the vehicle (**1**), the weather conditions, and it can also be influenced by the driver of the vehicle (**1**). Preferably, the spectral characteristics of the light beam (**6**, **6'**, . . . ; **7**, **7'**, . . .) generated by the light source (**4**; **5**) depend on the position in the light beam (**6**, **6'**, . . . ; **7**, **7'**, . . .). The light beam comprises at least two light beam segments (**6**, **6'**; **7**, **7'**) having essentially different spectral characteristics.

24 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



SPERO EX. 2014

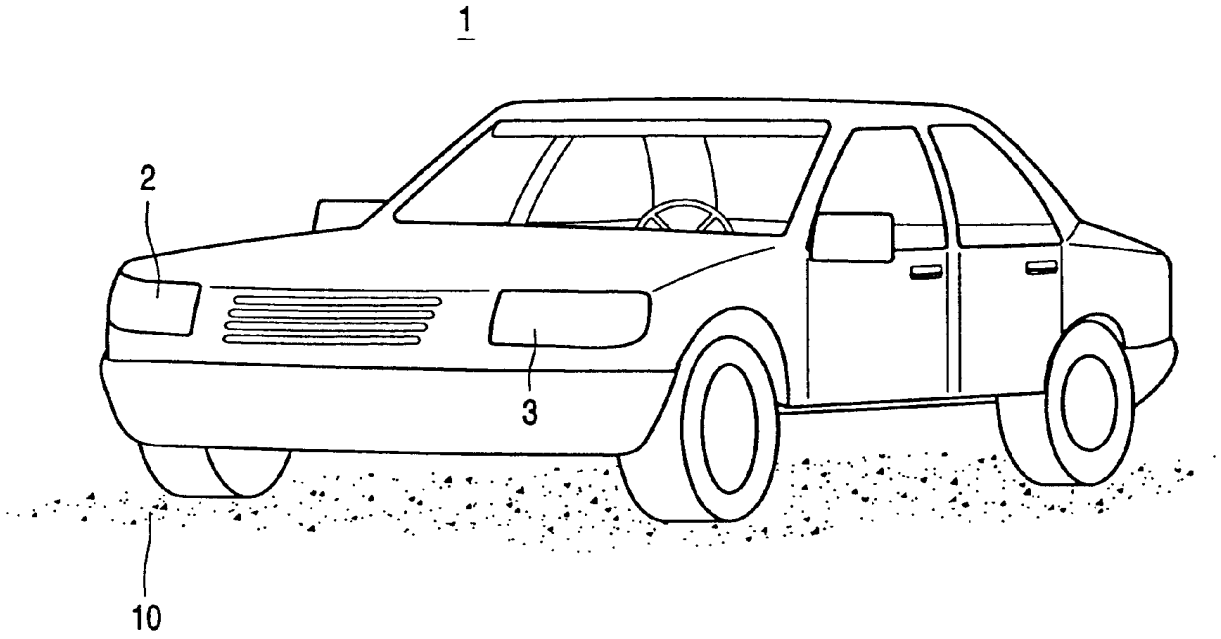


FIG. 1A

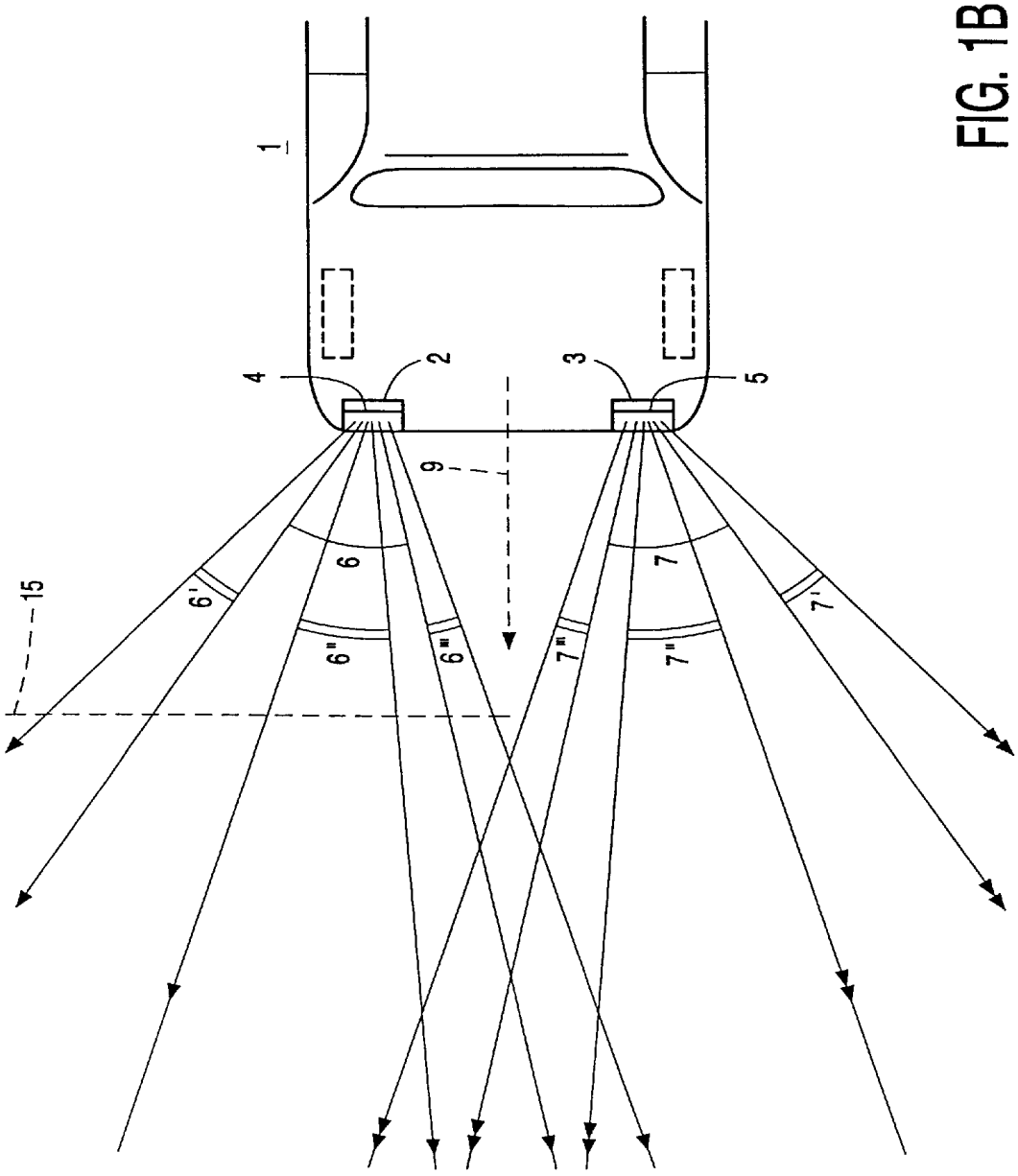


FIG. 1B

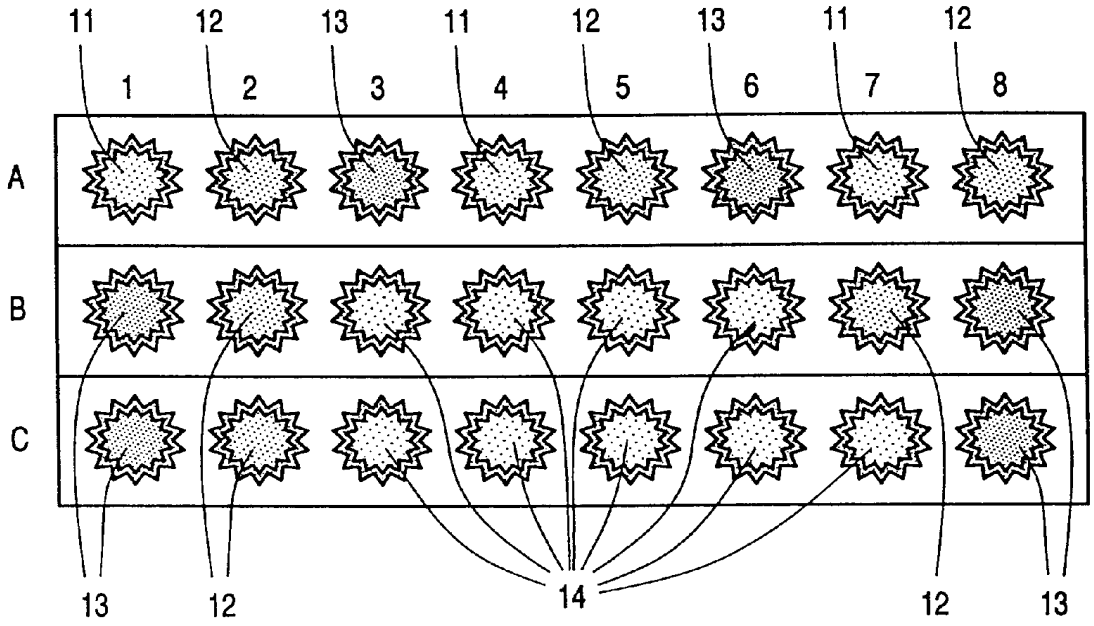


FIG. 2

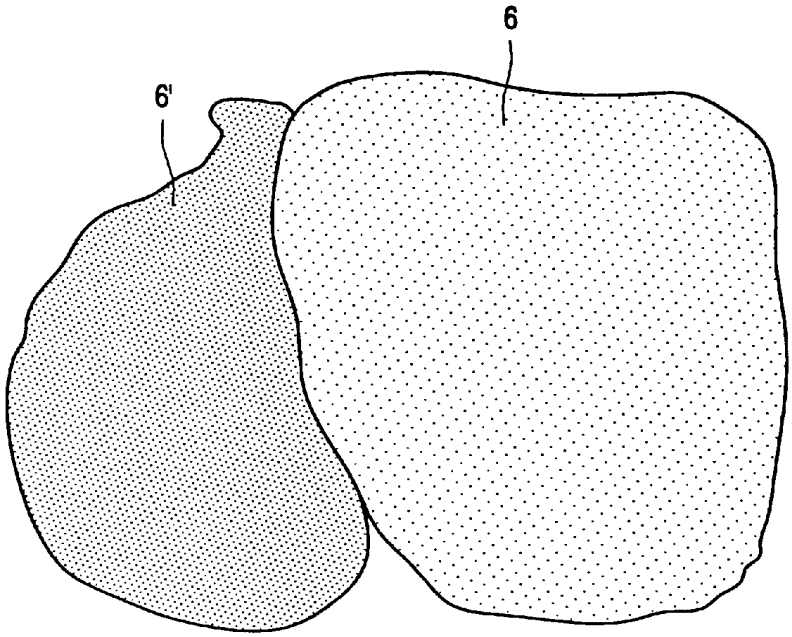


FIG. 3A

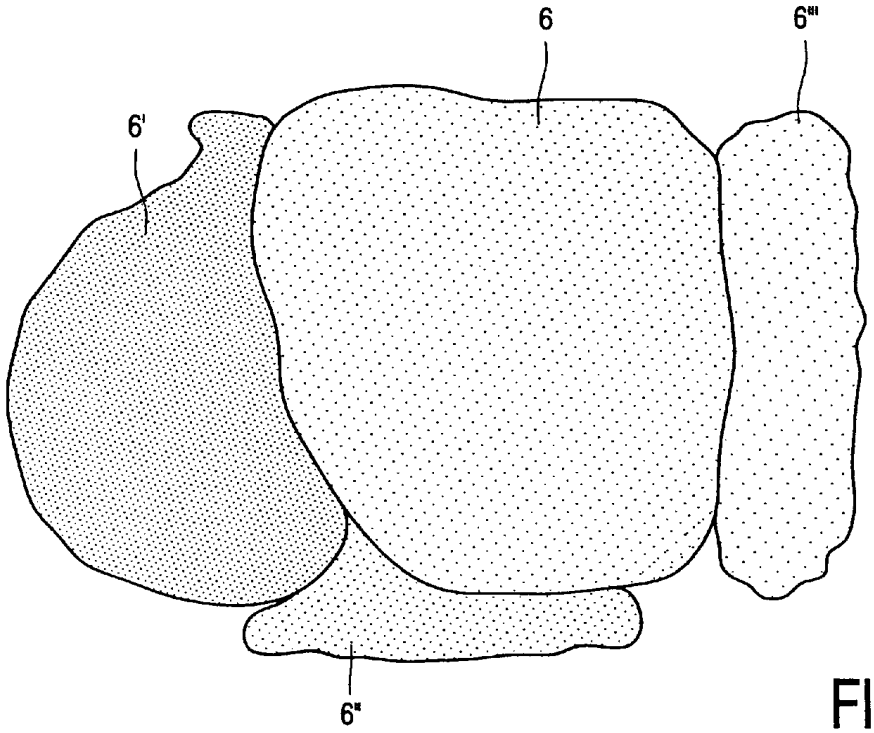


FIG. 3B

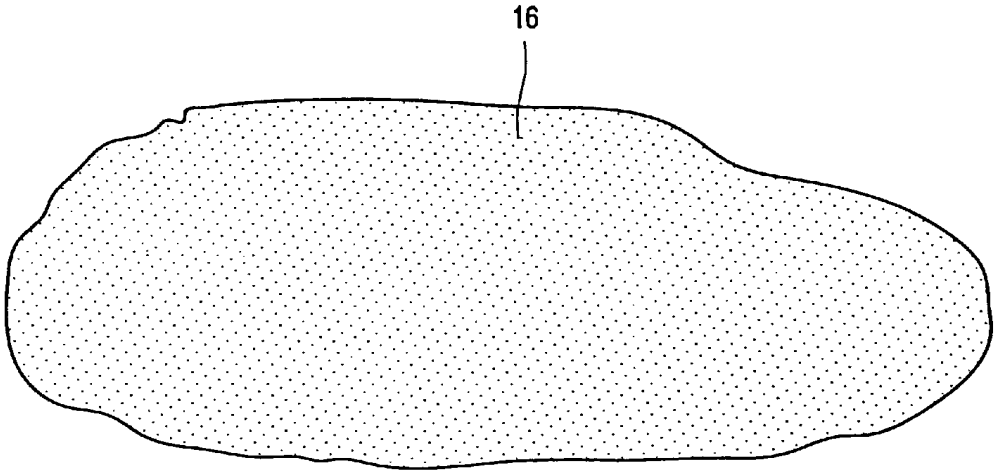


FIG. 4A

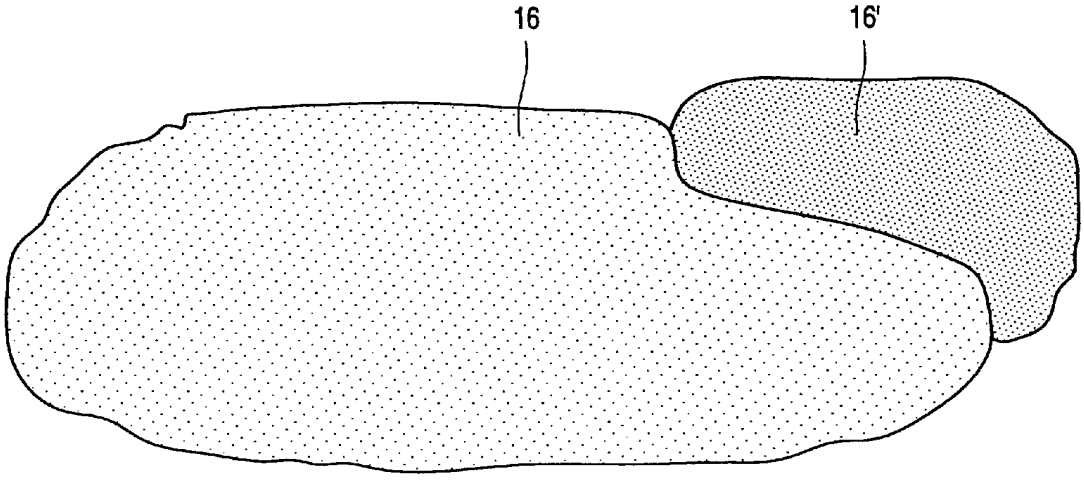


FIG. 4B

HEADLAMP AND DYNAMIC LIGHTING SYSTEM FOR VEHICLES

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

Applicants' application Ser. No. 09/599,792 filed Jun. 22, 2000 discloses related subject matter.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a vehicle headlamp comprising a light source which includes a plurality of opto-electronic elements.

The invention also relates to a vehicle provided with a headlamp.

Such headlamps are used on vehicles, such as cars, trucks, buses, bicycles and on vessels and aircraft.

Vehicle headlamps are known per se. A vehicle headlamp generally comprises an electric lamp with an incandescent body, for example, in a halogen-containing inert gas (a so-called halogen lamp), or an electric lamp with a pair of electrodes in an ionizable gas (a so-called discharge lamp). Such headlamps are customarily built up of two light sources which, in operation, generate either a so-called passing beam or a so-called main beam. Vehicle headlamps are known wherein the light source for the passing beam and the light source for the main beam are housed in a single lamp vessel (the so-called H4). Other known vehicle headlamps are those wherein two types of light sources are used, for example a halogen lamp in combination with a discharge lamp. There are also headlamps which, in operation, generate colored light, which is generally brought about by a suitable coating provided on an outer surface of the lamp vessel. U.S. Pat. No. 5,685,637 discloses a vehicle headlamp wherein a halogen lamp is combined with a ring of light-emitting diodes (LEDs).

The known vehicle headlamp has the drawback that, in principle, it constitutes a static lighting system.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the invention to provide a vehicle headlamp of the type described in the opening paragraph, which exhibits more dynamic lighting possibilities.

To achieve this, the vehicle headlamp is characterized in accordance with the invention in that

- a luminous flux of at least one of the opto-electronic elements amounts, in operation, to at least 5 lm,
- and in that a light beam generated by the light source has a continuously adjustable spatial distribution.

Opto-electronic elements, also referred to as electro-optical elements, for example electroluminescent elements, such as light-emitting diodes (LEDs) with a luminous flux of 5 lm or more can suitably be used as a light source for vehicle headlamps. A relatively high luminous flux is necessary to ensure that also under ambient light conditions, for example sunlight or light originating from headlamps of other vehicles, sufficient light is generated so that a light beam generated by the light source can be observed sufficiently clearly from a distance.

To generate a so-called passing beam and/or a so-called main beam, a conventional vehicle headlamp requires a luminous flux ranging between 600 and 1000 lm to meet internationally standardized and specified light beam intensities. Current technology of opto-electronic elements, particularly that of light-emitting diodes, has yielded two different material systems which can suitably be used for different regions of the visible spectrum, i.e. Al-In-Ga-N for blue-green light and Al-In-Ga-P for yellow-red light. As a result, any desired spectral characteristic can be produced by combining suitable light-emitting diodes.

The use of a plurality of opto-electronic elements with a relatively high luminous flux enables a vehicle headlamp to be manufactured having much more dynamic lighting possibilities than the known vehicle headlamp. The opto-electronic elements can be switched on and switched off, with the spatial distribution of the generated light beam depending on the conditions. Said conditions may be influenced by conditions outside the vehicle, the so-called external conditions. External conditions include, for example, the general lighting level (day or night situation), the shape of the road (width, number of bends), the weather conditions (bright weather, fog, rain, snow, etc.) and the velocity at which and/or the direction in which the vehicle is moving. Conditions which also influence the spatial distribution may be determined by conditions inside the vehicle, the so-called internal conditions. Internal conditions include, for example, the shapes of the light beam as set or desired by the driver.

In the description of the current invention, a light beam having a continuously adjustable spatial distribution is to be taken to mean that the opto-electronic elements can be switched on and off in such a manner that the light beam can assume various shapes, which shapes may demonstrate a partial overlap and may, more or less gradually, merge. The luminous flux of the opto-electronic elements may be changed with respect to each other. If a light beam is adjustable, also the intensity and/or spectral characteristic of the light beam, or of segments of the light beam, may be different.

Since the spatial distribution is (continuously) adjustable, the driver's view of the road and the surroundings of the vehicle is improved. On the one hand, objects situated on or in the axis of the light beam, such as oncoming traffic, can be better observed. On the other hand, also the observation of objects outside the center of the light beam is improved. This observation of objects outside the center of the light beam is also referred to as off-axis viewing, as opposed to the so-called on-axis viewing, which refers to the visibility of objects which are situated in the center, or in the immediate vicinity of the center, of the light beam. Examples of off-axis viewing include the observation of objects situated at or near the edge of the field of vision of the driver of the vehicle, for example the shoulder of the road, (unlit) objects, such as pedestrians or cyclists at the edge of the road on which the vehicle is traveling, and the observation of vehicles traveling on a road which crosses the road on which the vehicle provided with the headlamp in accordance with the invention is traveling.

The known vehicle headlamp has two light sources, namely a halogen lamp and a ring of light-emitting diodes, however, the halogen lamp produces a light beam of visible light and the LEDs emit infrared light at 880 nm. The individual light beams of the known vehicle headlamp are static in character and the light beam generated by the light source does not have a continuously adjustable spatial distribution.

An embodiment of the vehicle headlamp is characterized in accordance with the invention in that the light source consists of a plurality of opto-electronic elements. Consequently, the vehicle headlamp is composed of one type of light source. By combining LEDs or so-called multi-chip packages having a luminous flux in the range from 10–250 lm, the luminous flux of a suitable combination of 25 such

elements, or fewer, preferably a combination of 15 such elements, or fewer, such as a combination of four such elements, meets the international standard ranging between 600 and 1000 lm. The dimensions of a vehicle headlamp comprising such a relatively small number of opto-electronic elements are comparable to the dimensions of a conventional vehicle headlamp. An additional advantage of the use of LEDs is that the service life of these opto-electronic elements is very long as compared to that of the conventional vehicle headlamp.

In a preferred embodiment of the vehicle headlamp in accordance with the invention, the spatial distribution of the light beam can be influenced by the velocity of the vehicle. In this manner, the range and the width of the light beam can be adjusted as a function of the velocity of the vehicle. At relatively low velocities, it is desirable for the light distribution of the light beam to be wider, so that, for example, also the shoulders of the road are illuminated. The higher the velocity of the vehicle, the longer the braking distance of the vehicle will be in general, so that it is desirable for the range of the light beam to increase. It may also be desirable for the width of the light beam to decrease and/or the intensity distribution between on-axis viewing and off-axis viewing to change. By switching on or off one or more opto-electronic elements at specific limiting values of the velocity of the vehicle, a continuously adjustable spatial distribution of the light emitted by the vehicle headlamp is obtained.

An embodiment of the vehicle headlamp is characterized in accordance with the invention in that the spatial distribution of the light beam can be influenced by the rotational position of a steering wheel of the vehicle. This enables the spatial distribution of the light beam of the vehicle headlamp to be adapted to the position of the steering wheel of the vehicle. The light beam "rotates" simultaneously, as it were, with the desired direction of movement of the vehicle. When the steering wheel is rotated it may be desirable for the intensity of the light beam shining in a straight line to decrease. By switching on or off one or more opto-electronic elements at specific limiting values of the rotational position of the steering wheel of the vehicle, a continuously adjustable spatial distribution of the light emitted by the vehicle headlamp is obtained.

In a favorable embodiment of the vehicle headlamp in accordance with the invention, the spatial distribution of the light beam can be influenced by the weather conditions. Under unfavorable weather conditions, in particular fog and snow, when the visibility is reduced by backscattering from fog or snow particles, the shape of the light beam can be adapted by activating different combinations of opto-electronic elements and by changing the output levels of the different opto-electronic elements. As a result of these adaptations, the overall spatial distribution of the light is changed.

An embodiment of the vehicle headlamp is characterized in accordance with the invention in that the spatial distribution of the light beam can be influenced by a driver of the vehicle. This enables the spatial distribution, for example the range and/or the width of the light beam, to be adjusted by the driver. As a result of information regarding, for example, the road type (for example a relatively narrow country road or a broad multi-lane motorway), the presence of bends and the possibility of oncoming traffic, it becomes desirable to make the light distribution driver-adjustable. On a country road, it is desirable to have a relatively broad light distribution of the light beam, so that also the shoulders of the road are clearly illuminated. On a motorway, where it is likely that there will be oncoming traffic, the degree to which the vehicle headlamp dazzles should not be too high, which is achieved in that the driver adjusts the light beam so as to be relatively narrow.

An alternative embodiment of the vehicle headlamp is characterized in accordance with the invention in that the spectral characteristic of a light beam generated by the light source depends upon the position in the light beam. By making the spectral characteristic of the light beam generated by the light source dependent on the position in the light beam, objects situated outside the center of the light beam can be better observed. Preferably, the light beam comprises at least two beam segments having a substantially different spectral characteristic. In general, the intensity of the light beam emitted by a vehicle headlamp decreases as a function of the position in the light beam, i.e. the intensity is maximal in the center of the light beam and gradually decreases in the direction of positions situated at a larger distance from the center of the light beam. As a result, the intensity of the light for so-called on-axis viewing is relatively much higher than for the so-called off-axis viewing.

It is well-known that the sensitivity of the human eye changes with the wavelength of the light and that equal quantities of energy of different wavelengths generally cause different sensations of brightness. In other words, if we consider a spectrum, and the received energy (per unit of time) is equal for all wavelengths, the middle of the visible region will apparently be brighter than the red and the blue ends. If the intensity of the light is relatively high (luminous efficiency $\geqq 3.5$ cd/m^2), the maximum of the brightness lies at a wavelength of 555 nm (green/yellow), the so-called photopic eye-sensitivity curve. At this wavelength, particularly the cones are active in the human eye. If the intensity of the light is relatively low (luminous efficiency $\leqq 0.035$ cd/m^2), the maximum of the brightness lies at a wavelength of 507 nm (blue/green or cyanblue), the so-called scotopic eye-sensitivity curve. At this wavelength, particularly the rods are active in the human eye.

It is advantageous to bring about substantially different spectral characteristics of the light beam for the on-axis and the off-axis parts of the light beam. In particular, in the off-axis parts of the light beam, the spectral characteristic of the light is adapted to a light intensity which is relatively low. By thus making the spectral characteristic of the light beam generated by the light source dependent upon the position in the light beam, the visibility of objects situated outside the center of the light beam is improved.

It is noted that, in practice, also photopic and scotopic light beams preferably have a broad spectrum, which light beams both have a more or less "white" appearance. The difference between a photopic and a scotopic light beam corresponds, as it were, to a difference between a light beam having a high and a low color temperature.

There is a possibility that the above-mentioned beam segments may comprise segments demonstrating a partial overlap. A possibly non-continuous transition between the beam segments may be perceived as unpleasant by the driver of the vehicle.

Preferably, a first beam segment has a spectral characteristic which is rich in green-yellow light, and a second beam segment has a spectral characteristic which is rich in blue-green light. On the one hand, in the on-axis part of the light beam (the first beam segment) a spectral characteristic of the light is presented which is adapted to the photopic eye-sensitivity curve, i.e. rich in green-yellow light. On the other hand, in the off-axis parts of the light beam (the second beam segment) a spectral characteristic of the light is presented which is adapted to the scotopic eye-sensitivity curve, i.e. rich in blue-green light.

These and other aspects of the invention will be apparent from and elucidated with reference to the embodiments described hereinafter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1A** is a perspective view of a vehicle provided with a headlamp in accordance with the invention;

FIG. **1B** is a plan view of a part of the vehicle shown in FIG. **1A**; and

FIG. **2** is a sectional view of a light source comprising a plurality of opto-electronic elements arranged in accordance with a regular pattern;

FIG. **3A** shows a light beam generated by a first beam segment in combination with a so-called off-axis light beam generated by a second beam segment;

FIG. **3B** shows the light beams of FIG. **3A** and two additional light beams for improving the on-axis observation conditions;

FIG. **4A** shows a relatively broad light beam which predominantly consists of yellow light, and

FIG. **4B** shows the relatively broad light beam of FIG. **4A** in combination with a side light beam dependent upon the position of the steering wheel of the vehicle.

These Figures are purely diagrammatic and not drawn to scale. Particularly for clarity, some dimensions are exaggerated strongly. In the Figures, like reference numerals refer to like parts whenever possible.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

FIG. **1A** is a very diagrammatic, perspective view of a vehicle **1** situated on a road **10** and provided with a headlamp **2**; **3** in accordance with the invention. FIG. **1B** is a diagrammatic, plan view of a part of the vehicle **1** shown in FIG. **1A**. Each one of the vehicle headlamps **2**; **3** is provided with a light source **4**; **5**, which emits (diverging) light beams **6**, **6'**, . . . ; **7**, **7'**, . . . in a longitudinal direction **9**. FIG. **1B** further shows an imaginary screen **15** for trapping the light emitted by the light beams **6**, **6'**. In accordance with the invention, the spatial distribution of the light beams **6**, **6'**, . . . ; **7**, **7'**. . . generated by the light source **4**; **5** is continuously adjustable.

In the example shown in FIG. **1B**, each one of the light beams originating from the light source **4**; **5** of the vehicle headlamp **2**; **3** is subdivided into four beam segments **6**, **6'**, **6"**, **6'"**; **7**, **7'**, **7"**, **7'"**, namely in:

- a first beam segment **6**; **7** comprising a relatively wide, central part of the light beam, which first beam segment **6**; **7** comprises a kind of passing beam;
- a second beam segment **6'**, **7'** comprising a part of the light beam which is directed in particular towards the edge of the road (the shoulder of the road);
- a third beam segment **6"**; **7"** comprising a relatively narrow part of the light beam, which is directed particularly towards the center of the road, and the direction of which may be dependent upon the rotational position of the steering wheel of the vehicle;
- and a fourth beam segment **6'"**; **7'"** comprising a relatively narrow central part of the light beam, which fourth beam segment **6'"**; **7'"** comprises a kind of main beam, the spectral characteristic of the fourth beam segment **6'"**; **7'"** differing substantially from the spectral characteristic of the other beam segments **6**, **6'**, **6"**; **7**, **7'**, **7"**.

The light beams may also be composed of more than four beam segments, for example five or more beam segments having different spatial distributions and/or different spectral characteristics. In general, the light originating from two or more beam segments demonstrates an overlap. Partly because of the generally diverging character of the light beams, overlap between the various beam segments **6**, **6'**, **6"**, **6'"**; **7**, **7'**, **7"**, **7'"** is unavoidable.

FIG. **2** is a sectional view of the light source **4** comprising a plurality of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** which are arranged in accordance with a regular pattern. Similarly, a plurality of opto-electronic elements may be provided in the light source **5** (not shown). The pattern in which the opto-electronic elements are arranged in light source **4** may differ from that in light source **5**. For example, for reasons of symmetry, the pattern in which the opto-electronic elements are arranged in the light source **5** may be mirror-inverted with respect to that in light source **4**. In addition, the number of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** in light source **4** does not have to be equal to that in light source **5**. The array of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** does not have to be provided on a flat substrate, it may alternatively be provided on a curved substrate. The shape of the substrate on which the array of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** is provided is determined to a substantial degree by the desired direction of the light beams emitted by the various opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14**.

In accordance with the invention, the luminous flux of at least one of the opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** is at least 5 lm, in operation. Preferably, in operation, all opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** have a luminous flux above 5 lm. Preferably, the vehicle headlamp **2**; **3** is composed of a single type of light source **4**; **5**. In other words, the light source **4**; **5** is preferably exclusively composed of a plurality of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14**.

If opto-electronic elements with a luminous flux of 5 lm or more are to be efficiently employed, it is desirable to provide the vehicle headlamp with heat-dissipating means. For example, the substrate on which the opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** are provided may consist of a metal or a metal alloy. As a result, a good heat conduction from the opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** to the substrate is achieved.

In the example shown in FIG. **2**, the light source **4**; **5** is exclusively composed of a plurality of light-emitting diodes (LEDs). In this example an array of 8×3 LEDs. For identification purposes, in FIG. **2**, the rows are indicated by letters A, B, C, and the columns by digits 1–8. By using LEDs or so-called multi-chip packages with a luminous flux in the range from 10–250 lm for blue, yellow/orange, red and green light, the luminous flux of a suitable combination of 25 such elements, or fewer, preferably a combination of 15 such elements, or fewer, for example a combination of 4 such elements meets the internationally standardized and specified intensities for generating the passing beam and/or the main beam, which intensities range between 600 and 1000 lm. The dimensions of a vehicle headlamp **2**; **3** having such a relatively small number of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** are comparable to, or much smaller than, the dimensions of a conventional vehicle headlamp.

By using a plurality of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14**, and by selectively switching on and off a number of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14**, the light beams generated by the light source **4**; **5** can be relatively readily subdivided into one or more beam segments **6**, **6'**; **7**, **7'** having a different spatial distribution or substantially different spectral characteristics. The vehicle **1** or the headlamp **2**; **3** is preferably provided with means (not shown) for changing the luminous flux of the opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** with respect to each other.

In the example shown in FIG. **2**, red LEDs are indicated by reference numeral **11**, green LEDs by reference numeral **12**, blue LEDs by reference numeral **13**, and yellow or white LEDs by reference. numeral **14**. By ordering the LEDs in the manner indicated in FIG. **2**, a substantial reduction of possible color effects is achieved for an observer looking into the light emitted by the vehicle headlamp (for example an oncoming car). In addition, optical systems which effectively mix the colors originating from the LEDs are available. This is important, in particular, to ensure that the red LEDs are not mistakenly taken for brake lights.

The example of the array of LEDs as shown in FIG. **2** represents an integrated module generating at least four types of light beams, namely various light beams which are switched on or off in dependence upon the velocity of the vehicle (sidelamps, passing beam, main beam), light beams which are switched on in dependence upon the rotational position of the steering wheel, light beams for bad weather conditions, and light beams which are specially adapted for use in areas where the intensity of the light is relatively low.

The ordering, providing and selectively switching on and off of opto-electronic elements **11**; **12**; **13**; **14** in the form of an array may also be considered as an invention in itself.

FIG. **3**A shows a light beam generated by a first beam segment **6** in combination with a so-called off-axis light beam generated by a second beam segment **6'**. The light originating from the beam segments **6**, **6'** is trapped by the imaginary screen **15** (see FIG. **1**B), in which case an observer looks against the longitudinal direction **9**. With reference to FIG. **2**, the first, so-called on-axis beam segment **6**, is generated by light beams originating from LEDs A**1**–A**8** and B**3**–B**5**, while the second, so-called off-axis beam segment **6'**, is generated by light beams originating from LEDs B**1**, B**2**, C**1** and C**2**. The other LEDs, as shown in FIG. **2**, are switched off under these lighting conditions.

FIG. **3**B not only shows the light beams shown in FIG. **3** but also two additional light beams which predominantly serve to improve the on-axis observation conditions. By additionally switching on the yellow or white LEDs C**3**–C**5**, a third beam segment **6"** is obtained, and by additionally switching on the yellow or white LEDs B**6**, C**6** and C**7**, a fourth beam segment **6'"** is obtained. The spectral characteristics of the first beam segment **6** and the third and fourth beam segment **6"**, **6'"** may be different. For example, it may be desirable to increase, in the beam segment **6"**, the quantity of in particular yellow light in order to improve the long-distance visibility. It may also be desirable, upon switching on the main beam (beam segment **6"**), to switch off a part of the passing beam (beam segment **6**) and/or of the off-axis beam segment **6'**.

In order to improve the visibility of the surroundings of the vehicle **1**, a substantially different spectral characteristic of the light beam is brought about between the on-axis parts and the off-axis parts of the light beam. In particular, in the off-axis beam segment **6'**, **7'** of the light beam, the spectral characteristic of the light is adapted to a light intensity which is relatively low. To obtain a good observation field at relatively low light intensities, preferably the spectral characteristic of one of the beam segments **6'**; **7'** is mesotopically tuned. This can be achieved by providing the first beam segment **6**; **7** and the third and fourth beam segments **6"**, **6'"**; **7"**, **7'"** with a spectral characteristic which is rich in white or yellow-orange light and by providing the second beam segment **6'**, **7'** with a spectral characteristic which is rich in blue-green light. By thus rendering the spectral characteristic of the light beam generated by the light source dependent upon the position in the light beam, objects situated outside the center of the light beam are better observed.

Under unfavorable weather conditions, in particular fog and snow, when visibility is reduced by backscattering caused by fog or snow particles, both the configuration and the spectral composition of the light beams generated by the light source **4**; **5** can be adapted by activating different combinations of LEDs and by changing the output levels of the various LEDs. As a result of these adaptations, the spatial and/or spectral distribution of the light is changed. An example of such an adaptation is shown in FIG. **4**A, wherein a relatively wide beam **16** is obtained which is substantially composed of yellow light. The absence of the blue component in the visible light causes the effect of backscattering to be substantially reduced.

FIG. **4**B shows the relatively wide beam **16** of FIG. **4**A in combination with a side light beam **16'** whose shape and intensity and position are dependent upon the position of the steering wheel of the vehicle **1**. Such a side light beam **16'** is preferably not switched on until the steering wheel of the vehicle exceeds a predetermined limiting angle when taking a bend or turning off. In this manner, the surface area and space wherein the vehicle is situated and where the vehicle is heading are dynamically illuminated as early as possible.

In general, the LED modules operate at a low-voltage direct current, so that they can be advantageously employed in a vehicle.

It will be obvious that within the scope of the invention many variations are possible to those skilled in the art. For example, the vehicle headlamp may have many different shapes, such as (rect)angular, round, oval, etc. One or more opto-electronic elements may also be suitable for use as indicator. In principle, the dimensions of the light beams are adjustable at will, for example, by creating a broader light beam (illuminating the shoulder of the road) at a lower speed of the vehicle, or by narrowing the beam at a relatively high speed. In addition, as a result of the large freedom of choice resulting from the use of (exclusively) opto-electronic elements, the location of the vehicle headlamp is no longer limited to the conventional location (at the front of the vehicle just above the road surface). It may be desirable to provide at least a part of the opto-electronic elements near the windscreen of the vehicle **1**. It is also possible to provide a further part of the opto-electronic elements on a side face of the vehicle. A future increase in the efficiency and light output of the LEDs will enable the number of LEDs to be further reduced.

The scope of protection of the invention is not limited to the above examples. The invention is embodied in each novel characteristic and each combination of characteristics. Reference numerals in the claims do not limit the scope of protection thereof. The use of the term "comprising" does not exclude the presence of elements other than those mentioned in the claims. The use of the word "a" or "an" before an element does not exclude the presence of a plurality of such elements.

What is claimed is:

1. A headlamp of a vehicle comprising a light source which includes a plurality of opto-electronic elements, wherein:

a luminous flux of at least one of the opto-electronic elements amounts, in operation, to at least 5 lm,

the opto-electronic elements form an array distributed evenly on a surface of the light source, and

a light beam generated by the light source has a continuously adjustable spatial distribution.

2. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim **1**, wherein the light source consists of a plurality of opto-electronic elements.

3. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the intensities of the light emitted by the opto-electronic elements are adjustable so that the range of said beam varies directly and the width of said beam varies inversely with the velocity of the vehicle.

4. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the intensities of the light emitted by the opto-electronic elements are adjustable so that the spatial distribution of said beam follows the rotational position of a steering wheel of the vehicle.

5. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the intensities of the light emitted by the opto-electronic elements are adjustable to decrease backscattering of said light beam by fog or snow particles in accordance with weather conditions.

6. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the intensities of the light emitted by the opto-electronic elements are adjustable by a driver of the vehicle to control the distribution of said light beam.

7. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the intensities of the light emitted by the opto-electronic elements are varied on said surface of the light source so that the spectral characteristic of said light beam is different at different points in a plane which is transverse to the light beam.

8. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 7, wherein the light beam comprises at least two beam segments, each having a substantially different spectral characteristic from the other.

9. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 8, wherein a first beam segment has a spectral characteristic which is rich in green-yellow light, and a second beam segment has a spectral characteristic which is rich in blue-green light.

10. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the opto-electronic elements comprise light-emitting diodes.

11. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surface of the light source is curved.

12. A vehicle headlight comprising a light source comprising a plurality of opto-electronic elements , wherein:

the opto-electronic elements form an array on a surface of the light source, said surface having a periphery, said array not being confined to the periphery of said surface, and

each said opto-electronic element is adjustable to emit light of variable intensity,

whereby a light beam generated by the light source has a continuously adjustable spatial distribution.

13. A headlamp of a vehicle comprising a light source which includes a plurality of opto-electronic elements, wherein

the opto-electronic elements are arrayed in columns and rows, and

the light emitted by each said opto-electric element is capable of being turned on or off separately,

whereby a light source with continuously adjustable spatial distribution is achieved.

14. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 13, wherein the light source consists of a plurality of opto-electronic elements.

15. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 13, wherein the intensities of the light emitted by the opto-electronic elements are varied on said surface of the light source so that the spectral characteristic of said light beam is different at different points in a plane which is transverse to the light beam.

16. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 15, wherein the light beam comprises at least two beam segments, each having a substantially different spectral characteristic from the other.

17. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 16, wherein a first beam segment has a spectral characteristic which is rich in green-yellow light, and a second beam segment has a spectral characteristic which is rich in blue-green light.

18. A vehicle headlamp as claimed in claim 13, wherein the opto-electronic elements comprise light-emitting diodes.

19. A vehicle headlight system comprising:

one or more light sources, each of which comprises a plurality of opto-electronic elements, wherein

the opto-electronic elements form an array on a surface of the light source, and

the opto-electronic-elements are each adjustable to emit light of varying intensity,

whereby light beams generated by the light sources have a continuously adjustable spatial distribution.

20. The vehicle headlight system of claim 19, further comprising a first light source having a first array of opto-electronic elements and a second light source having a second array of opto-electronic elements, said second array being different from said first array.

21. The vehicle headlight system of claim 20, wherein the second array is mirror-inverted with respect to the first array.

22. A headlamp of a vehicle comprising a light source which includes a plurality of opto-electronic elements, wherein:

each said opto-electronic element is adjustable to emit light of variable luminous flux,

whereby a light beam generated by the light source has a continuously adjustable spatial distribution.

23. The headlamp of claim 22 wherein the luminous flux of the opto-electronic elements are varied by turning each element on or off.

24. The headlamp of claim 22 wherein the luminous flux of the opto-electronic elements are varied with respect to each other.

* * * * *

Exhibit PA-C
U.S. Patent No. 6,281,632
Stam et al.

US006281632B1

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Stam et al.

(10) **Patent No.: US 6,281,632 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent: Aug. 28, 2001**

(54) **CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE HEADLAMP CONTROL**

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(58) **Field of Search** ..... 315/82, 77; 250/208.1, 250/214 AL; 307/10.8; 340/437, 438, 468, 469, 936, 939; 362/464, 465

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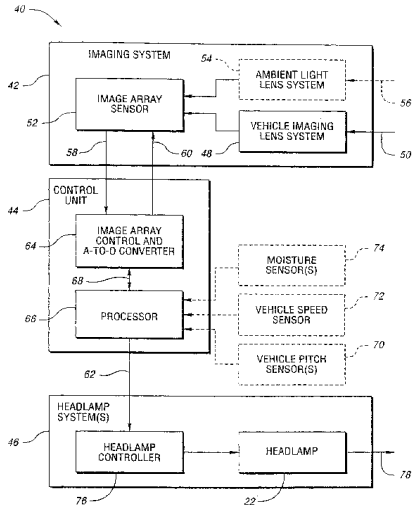
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Primary Examiner—Don Wong
Assistant Examiner—Thuy Vinh Tran
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Price, Heneveld, Cooper, DeWitt & Litton; Brian J. Rees

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Continuously variable headlamps offer greater flexibility for roadway illumination but offer challenges in automatic control design. Each continuously variable headlamp has an effective illumination range varied by changing at least one parameter from a set including horizontal direction aimed, vertical direction aimed, and intensity emitted. A system for automatically controlling continuously variable headlamps on a controlled vehicle includes an imaging system capable of determining lateral and elevational locations of headlamps from oncoming vehicles and tail lamps from leading vehicles. The system also includes a control unit that can acquire an image from in front of the controlled vehicle. The image covers a glare area including points at which drivers of oncoming and leading vehicles would perceive the headlamps to cause excessive glare. The image is processed to determine if at least one oncoming or leading is within the glare area. If at least one vehicle is within the glare area, the headlamp illumination range is reduced. Otherwise, the headlamp illumination range is set to full illumination range.

29 Claims, 21 Drawing Sheets



SPERO EX. 2014

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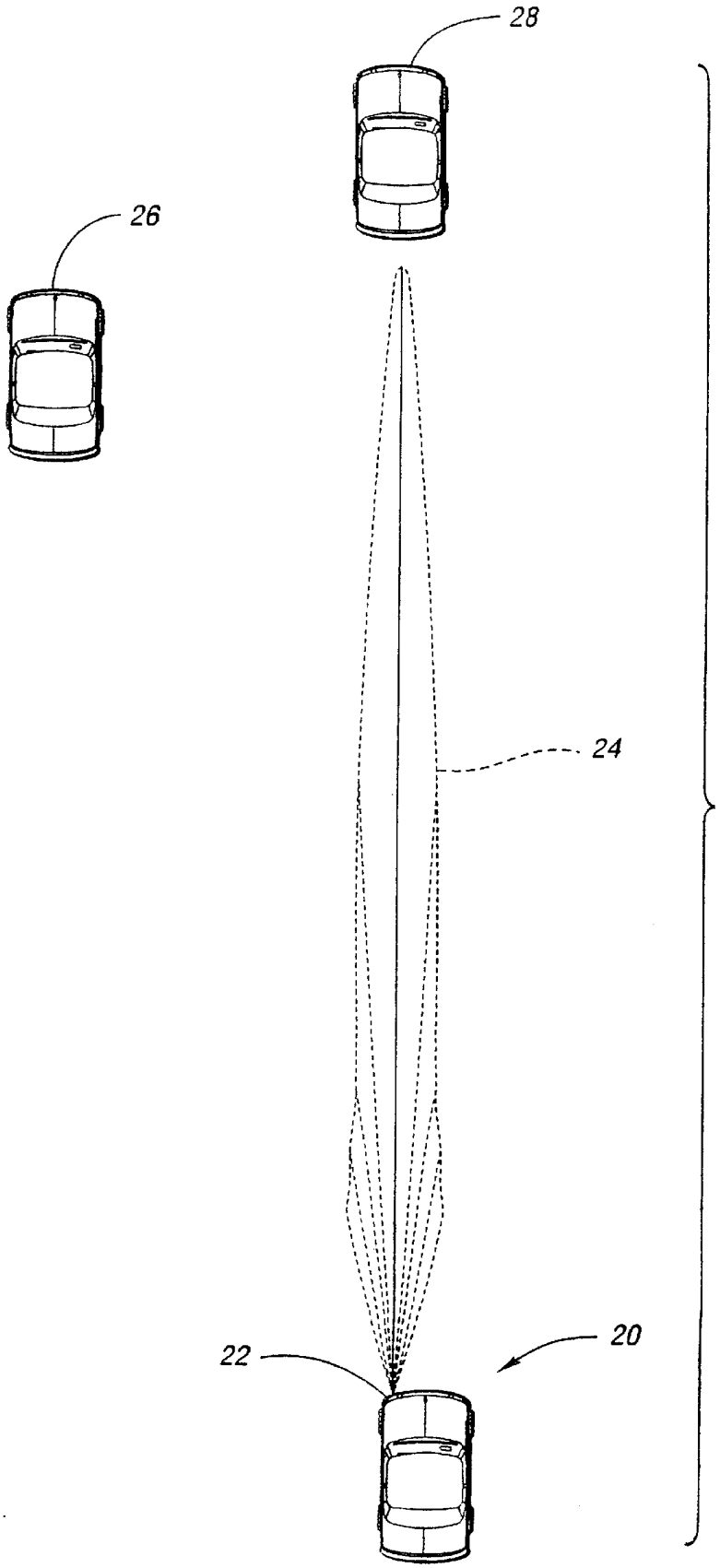


Fig. 1

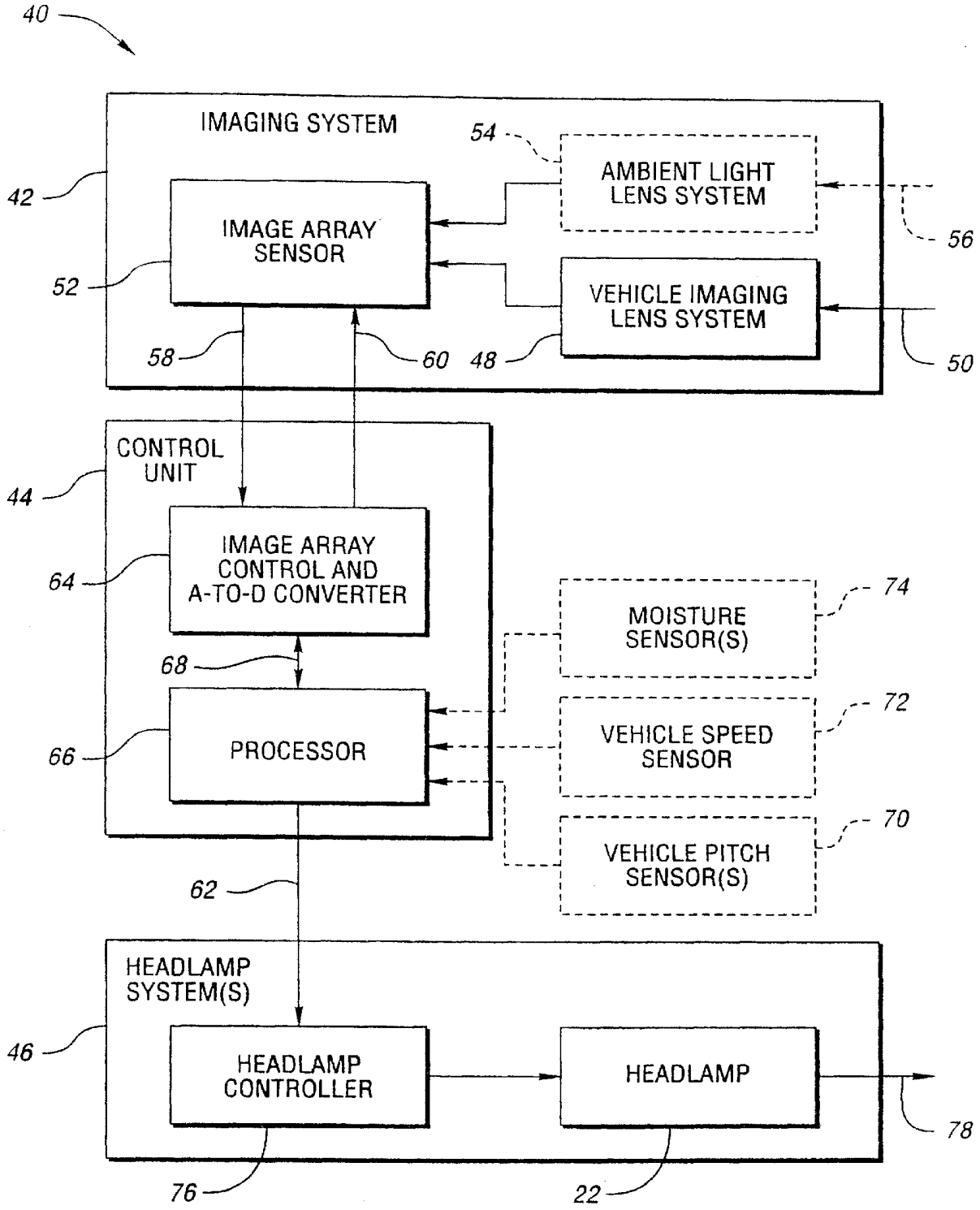

40
IMAGING SYSTEM
54
AMBIENT LIGHT LENS SYSTEM
42
IMAGE ARRAY SENSOR
56
52
VEHICLE IMAGING LENS SYSTEM
58
60
48
50
CONTROL UNIT
44
IMAGE ARRAY CONTROL AND A-TO-D CONVERTER
64
74
MOISTURE SENSOR(S)
68
72
VEHICLE SPEED SENSOR
66
PROCESSOR
70
VEHICLE PITCH SENSOR(S)
62
HEADLAMP SYSTEM(S)
46
HEADLAMP CONTROLLER
HEADLAMP
78
76
22

Fig. 2

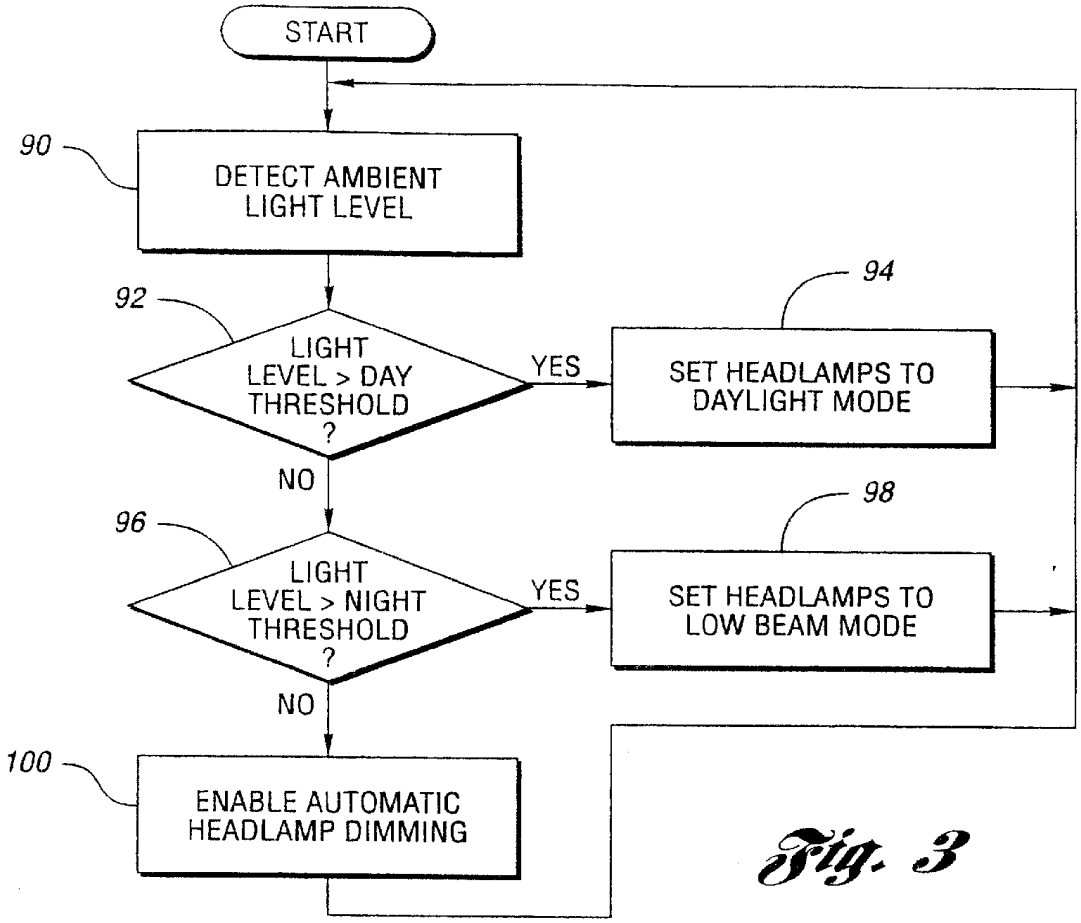

START
90
DETECT AMBIENT LIGHT LEVEL
92
LIGHT LEVEL > DAY THRESHOLD ?
YES
94
SET HEADLAMPS TO DAYLIGHT MODE
NO
96
LIGHT LEVEL > NIGHT THRESHOLD ?
YES
98
SET HEADLAMPS TO LOW BEAM MODE
NO
100
ENABLE AUTOMATIC HEADLAMP DIMMING

Fig. 3

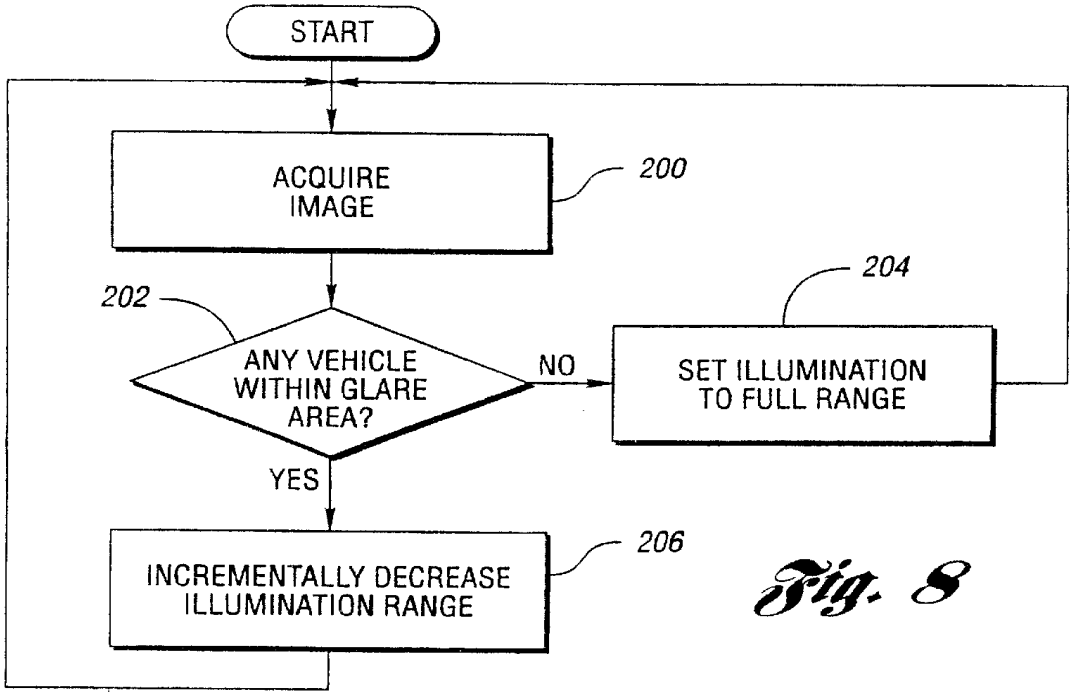

START
ACQUIRE IMAGE
200
202
ANY VEHICLE WITHIN GLARE AREA?
NO
204
SET ILLUMINATION TO FULL RANGE
YES
INCREMENTALLY DECREASE ILLUMINATION RANGE
206

Fig. 8

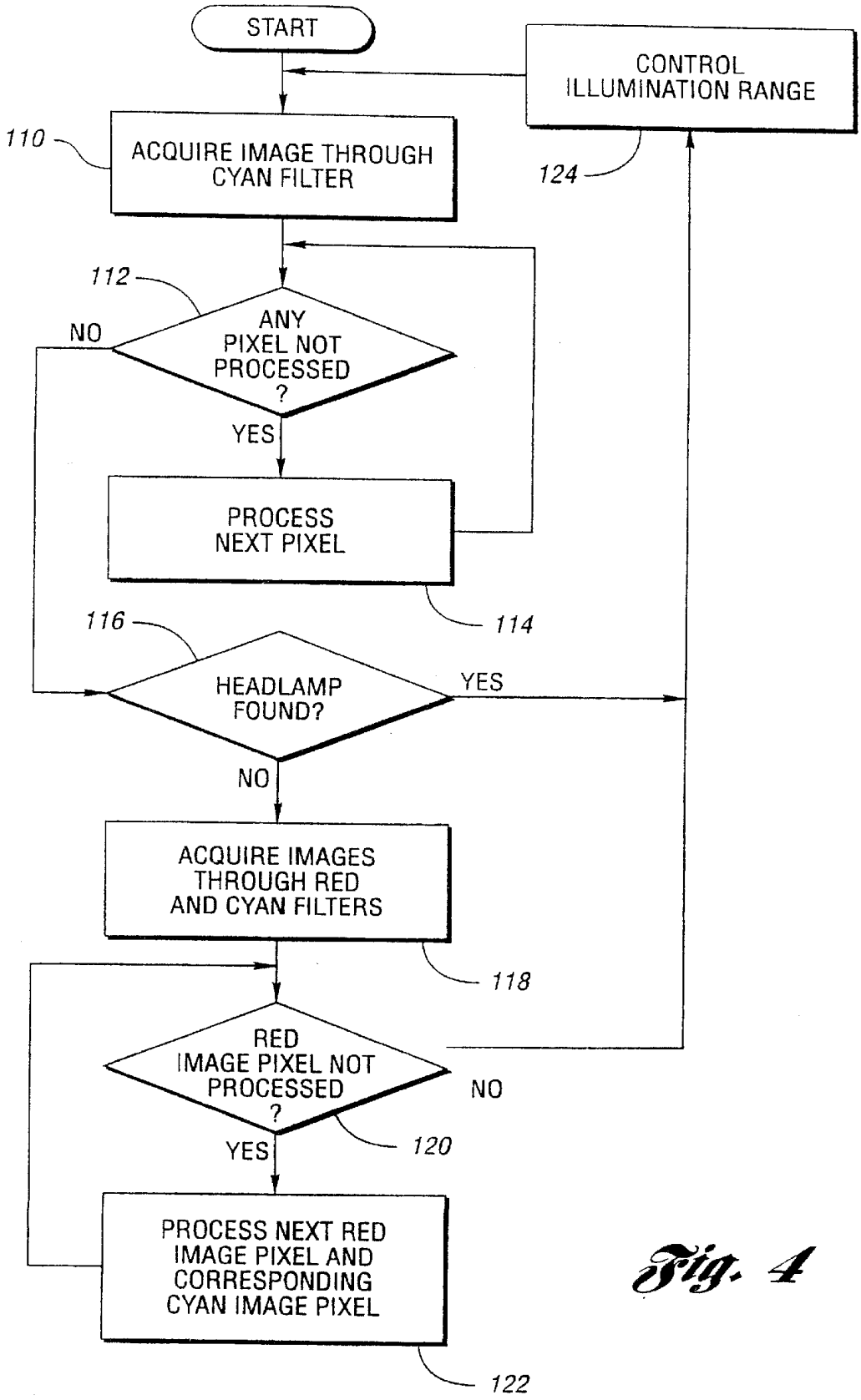

START
CONTROL ILLUMINATION RANGE
110
ACQUIRE IMAGE THROUGH CYAN FILTER
124
112
ANY PIXEL NOT PROCESSED ?
NO
YES
PROCESS NEXT PIXEL
114
116
HEADLAMP FOUND?
YES
NO
ACQUIRE IMAGES THROUGH RED AND CYAN FILTERS
118
RED IMAGE PIXEL NOT PROCESSED ?
NO
120
YES
PROCESS NEXT RED IMAGE PIXEL AND CORRESPONDING CYAN IMAGE PIXEL
122

Fig. 4

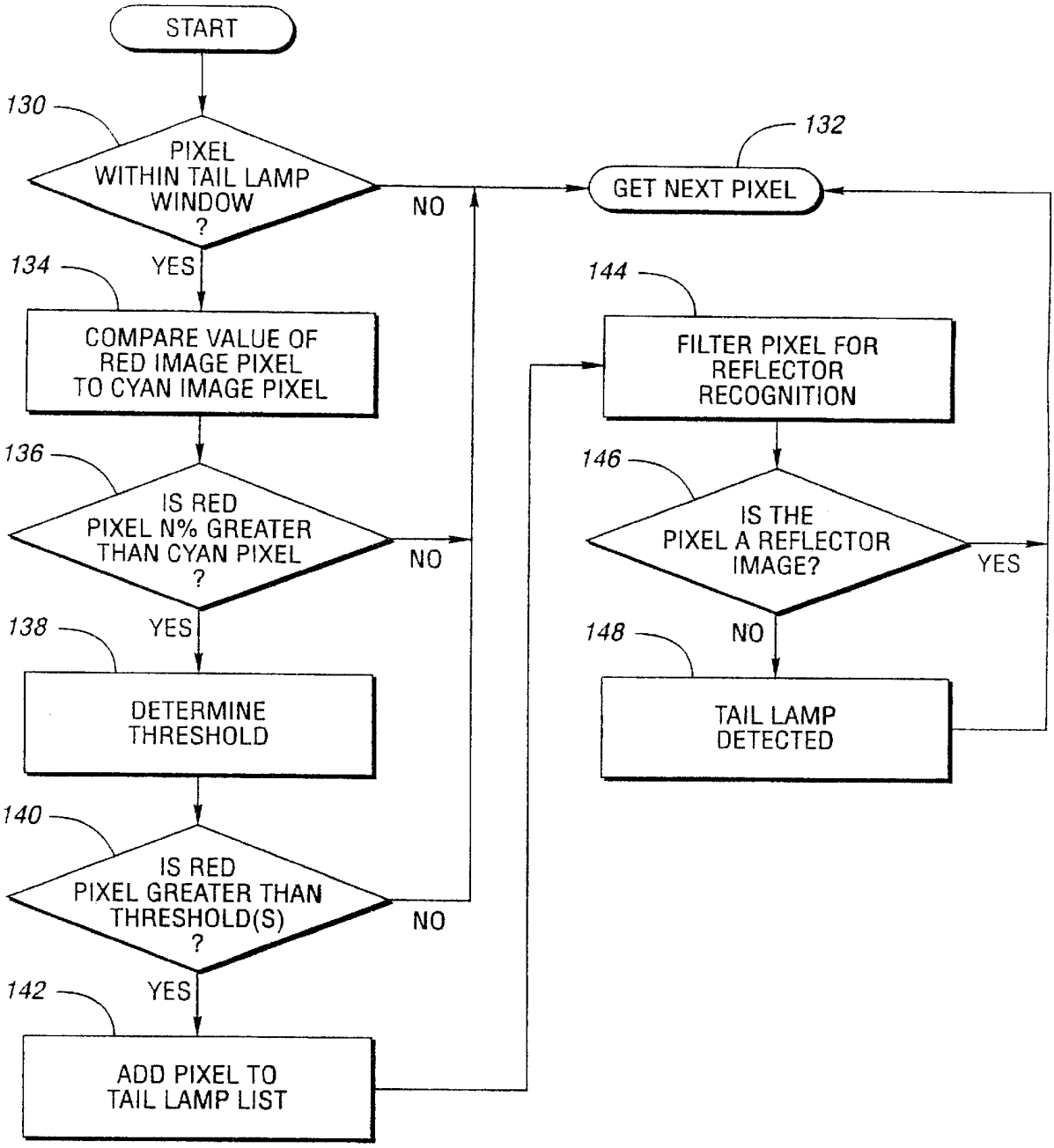

START
130
PIXEL WITHIN TAIL LAMP WINDOW ?
NO
132
GET NEXT PIXEL
YES
134
COMPARE VALUE OF RED IMAGE PIXEL TO CYAN IMAGE PIXEL
136
IS RED PIXEL N% GREATER THAN CYAN PIXEL ?
NO
YES
138
DETERMINE THRESHOLD
140
IS RED PIXEL GREATER THAN THRESHOLD(S) ?
NO
YES
142
ADD PIXEL TO TAIL LAMP LIST
144
FILTER PIXEL FOR REFLECTOR RECOGNITION
146
IS THE PIXEL A REFLECTOR IMAGE?
YES
NO
148
TAIL LAMP DETECTED

Fig. 5

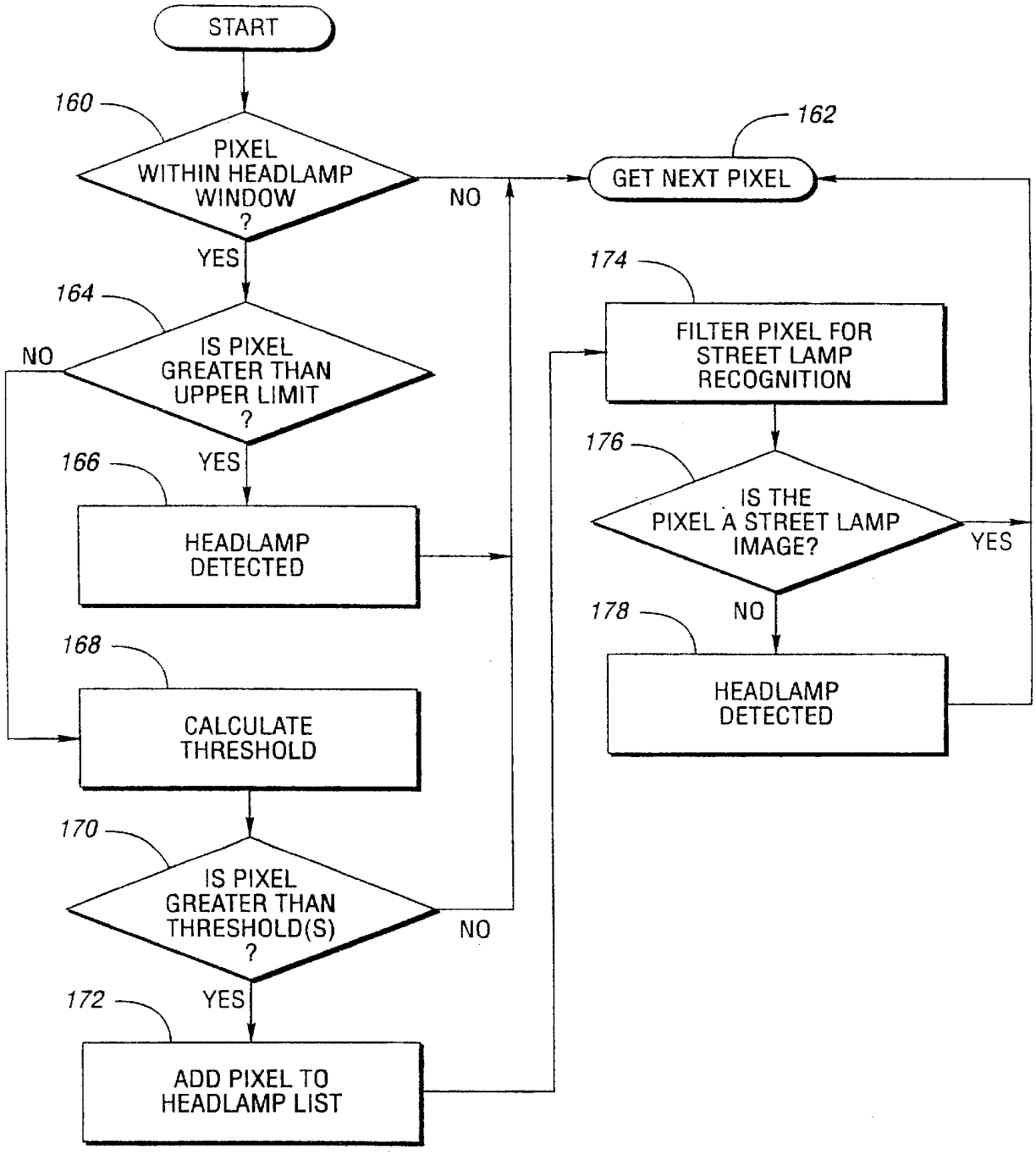

START
160
PIXEL WITHIN HEADLAMP WINDOW ?
NO
YES
162
GET NEXT PIXEL
164
IS PIXEL GREATER THAN UPPER LIMIT ?
NO
YES
166
HEADLAMP DETECTED
168
CALCULATE THRESHOLD
170
IS PIXEL GREATER THAN THRESHOLD(S) ?
NO
YES
172
ADD PIXEL TO HEADLAMP LIST
174
FILTER PIXEL FOR STREET LAMP RECOGNITION
176
IS THE PIXEL A STREET LAMP IMAGE?
YES
NO
178
HEADLAMP DETECTED

Fig. 6

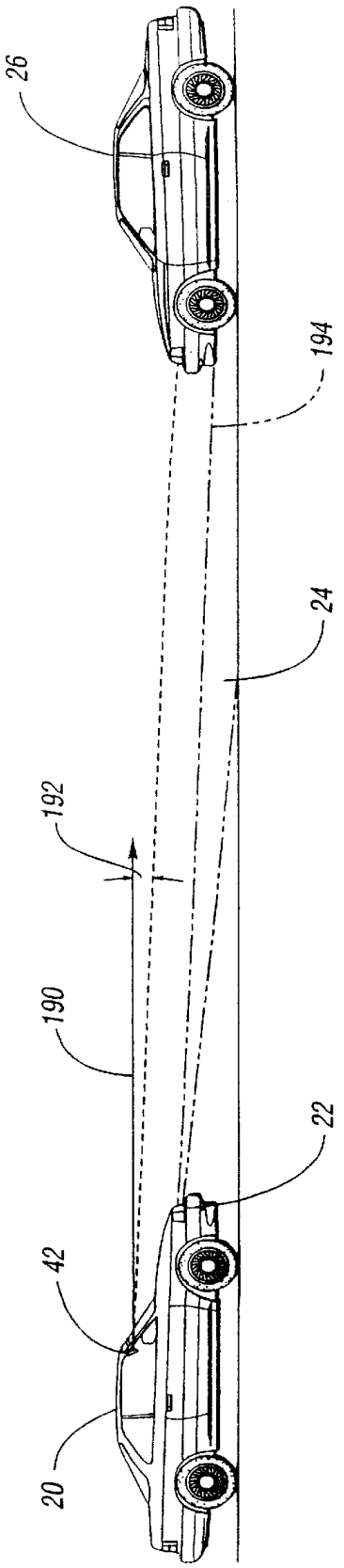


Fig. 7

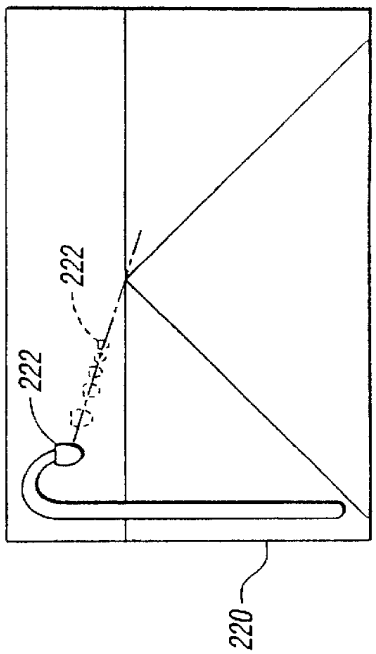


Fig. 9

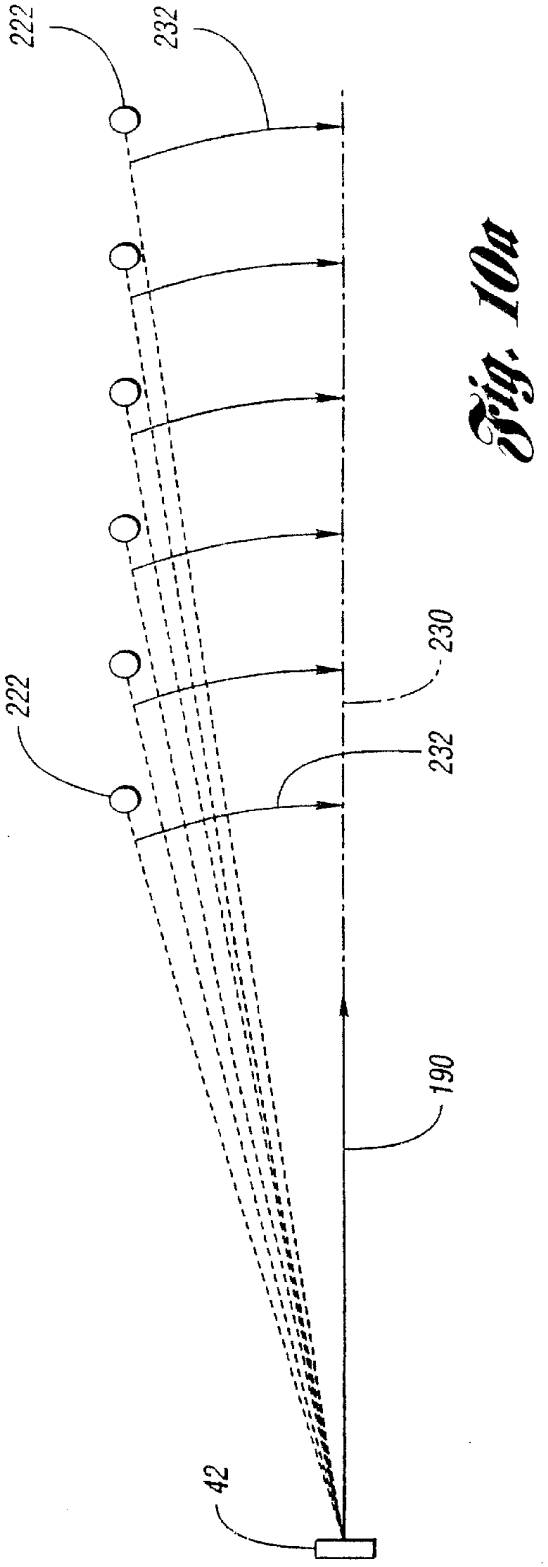


Fig. 10a

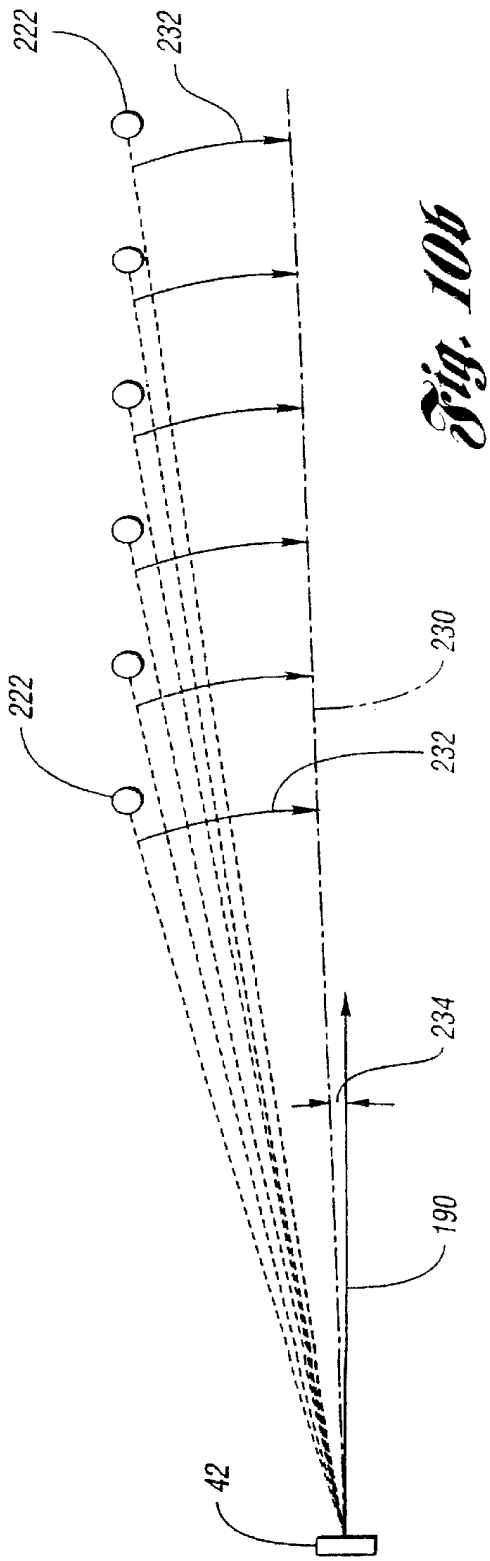


Fig. 10b

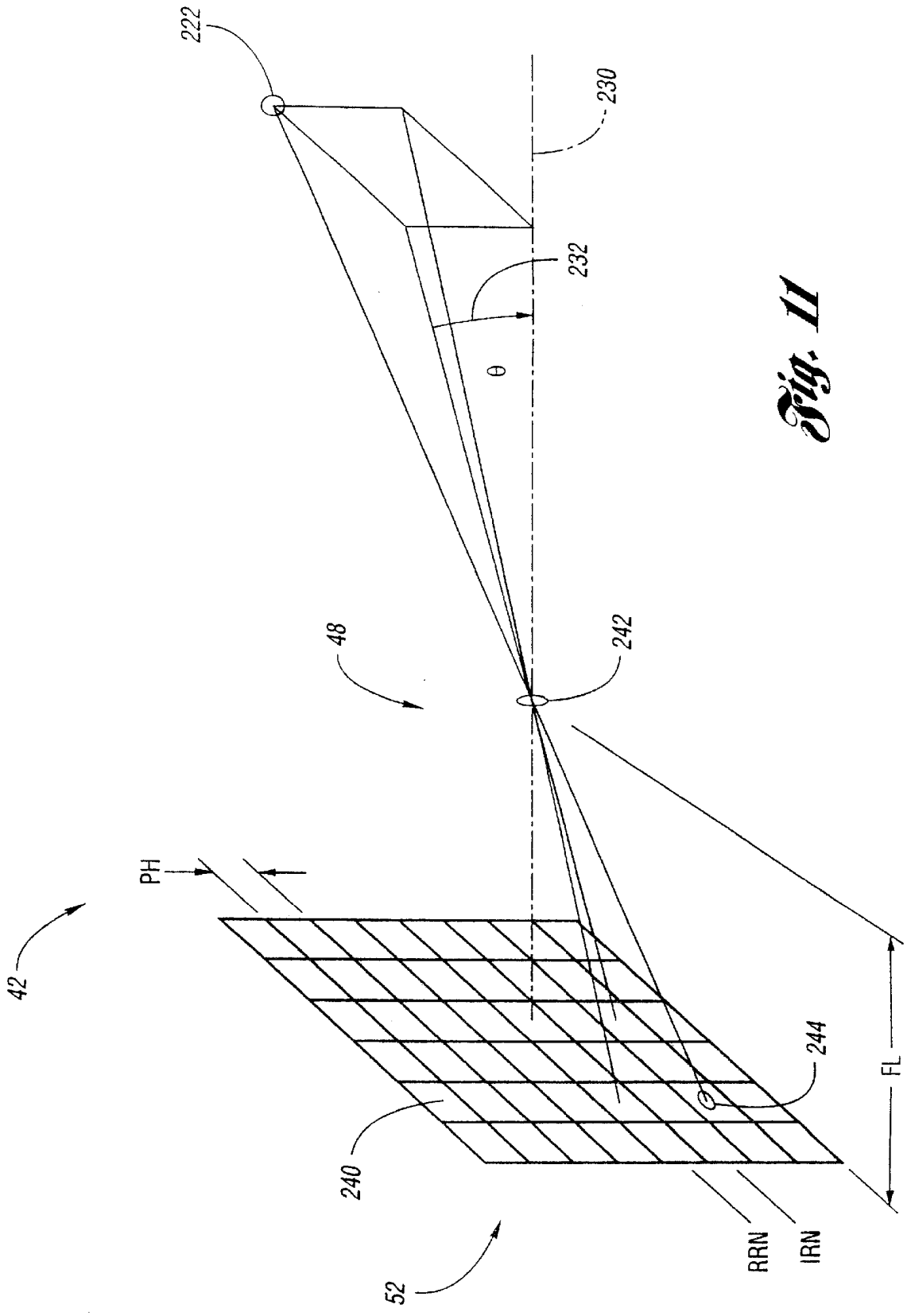


Fig. 11

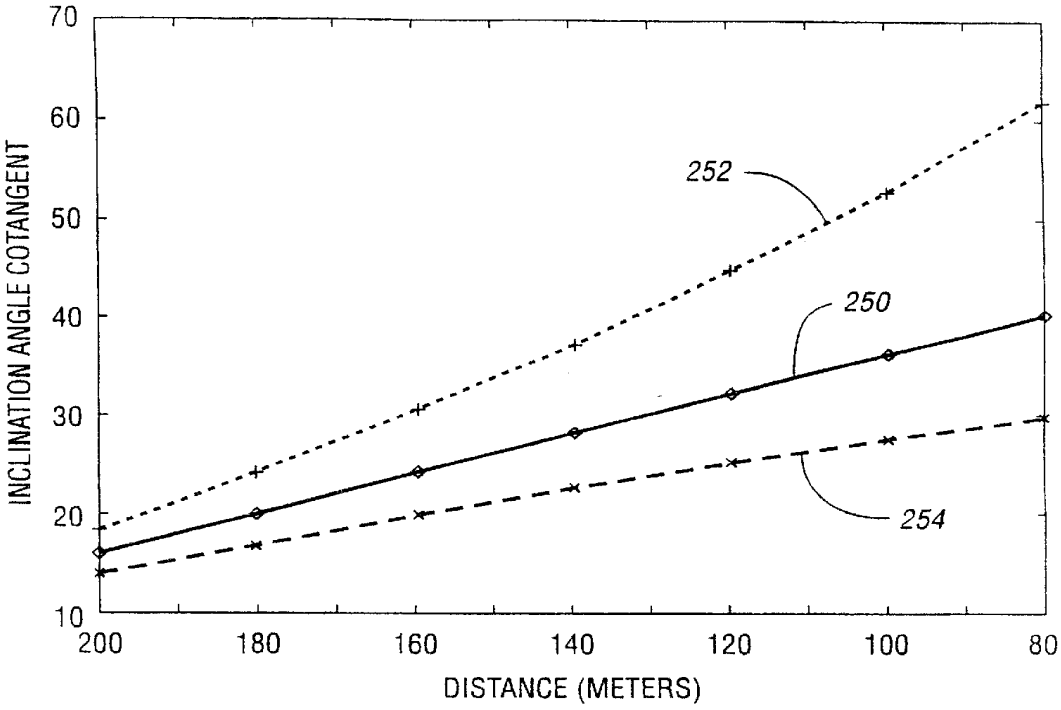

70
60
50
40
30
20
10
INCLINATION ANGLE COTANGENT
252
250
254
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
DISTANCE (METERS)

Fig. 12

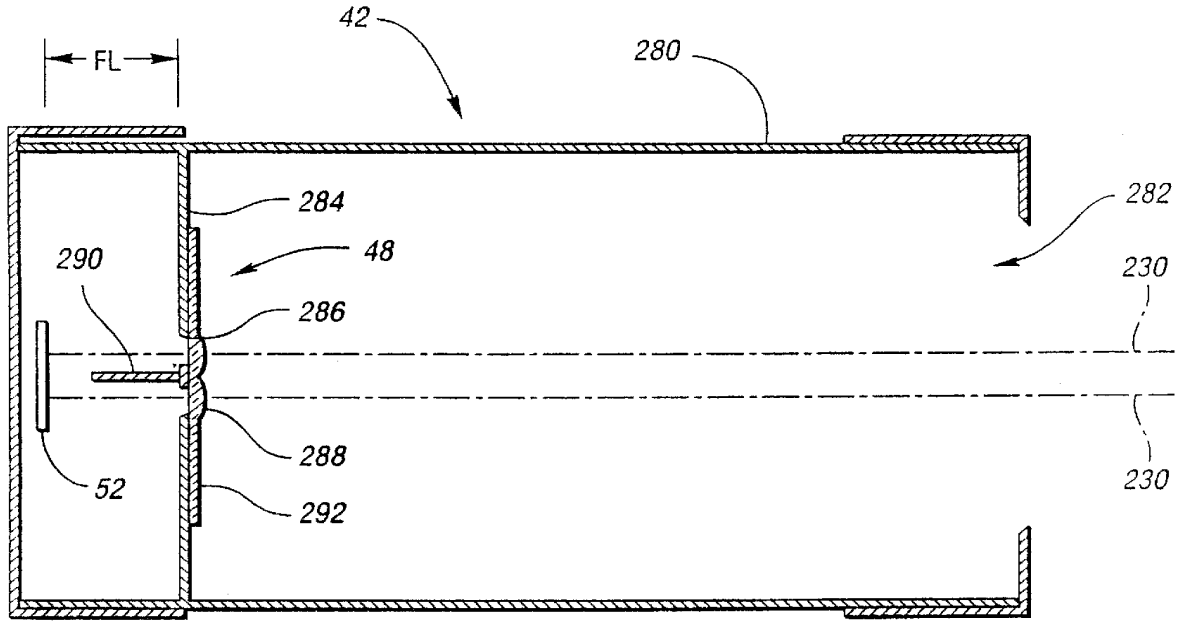

42
280
FL
284
282
48
290
230
286
288
52
292
230

Fig. 14

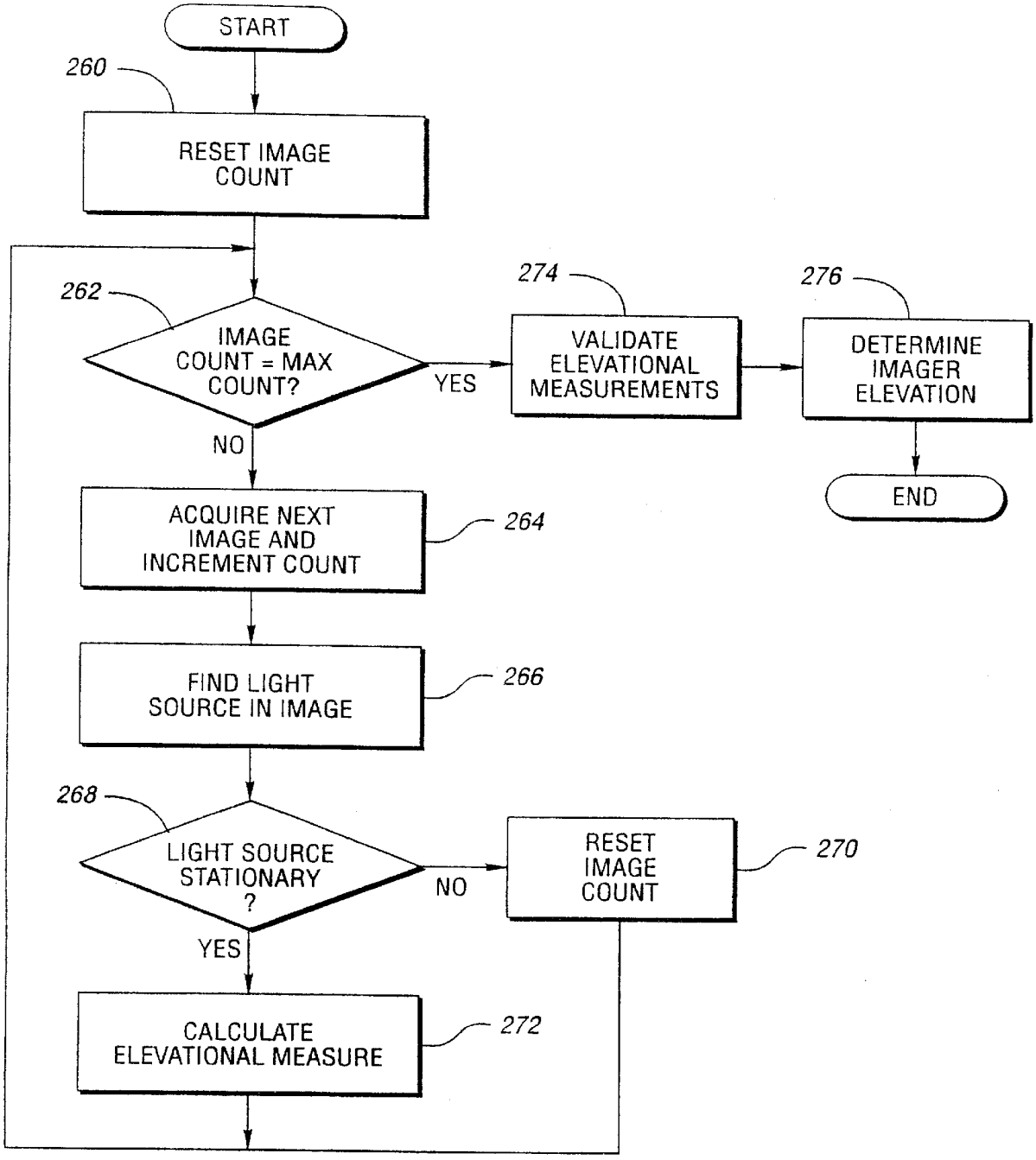

START
260
RESET IMAGE COUNT
262
IMAGE COUNT = MAX COUNT?
YES
NO
274
VALIDATE ELEVATIONAL MEASUREMENTS
276
DETERMINE IMAGER ELEVATION
END
ACQUIRE NEXT IMAGE AND INCREMENT COUNT
264
FIND LIGHT SOURCE IN IMAGE
266
268
LIGHT SOURCE STATIONARY ?
NO
YES
RESET IMAGE COUNT
270
CALCULATE ELEVATIONAL MEASURE
272

Fig. 13

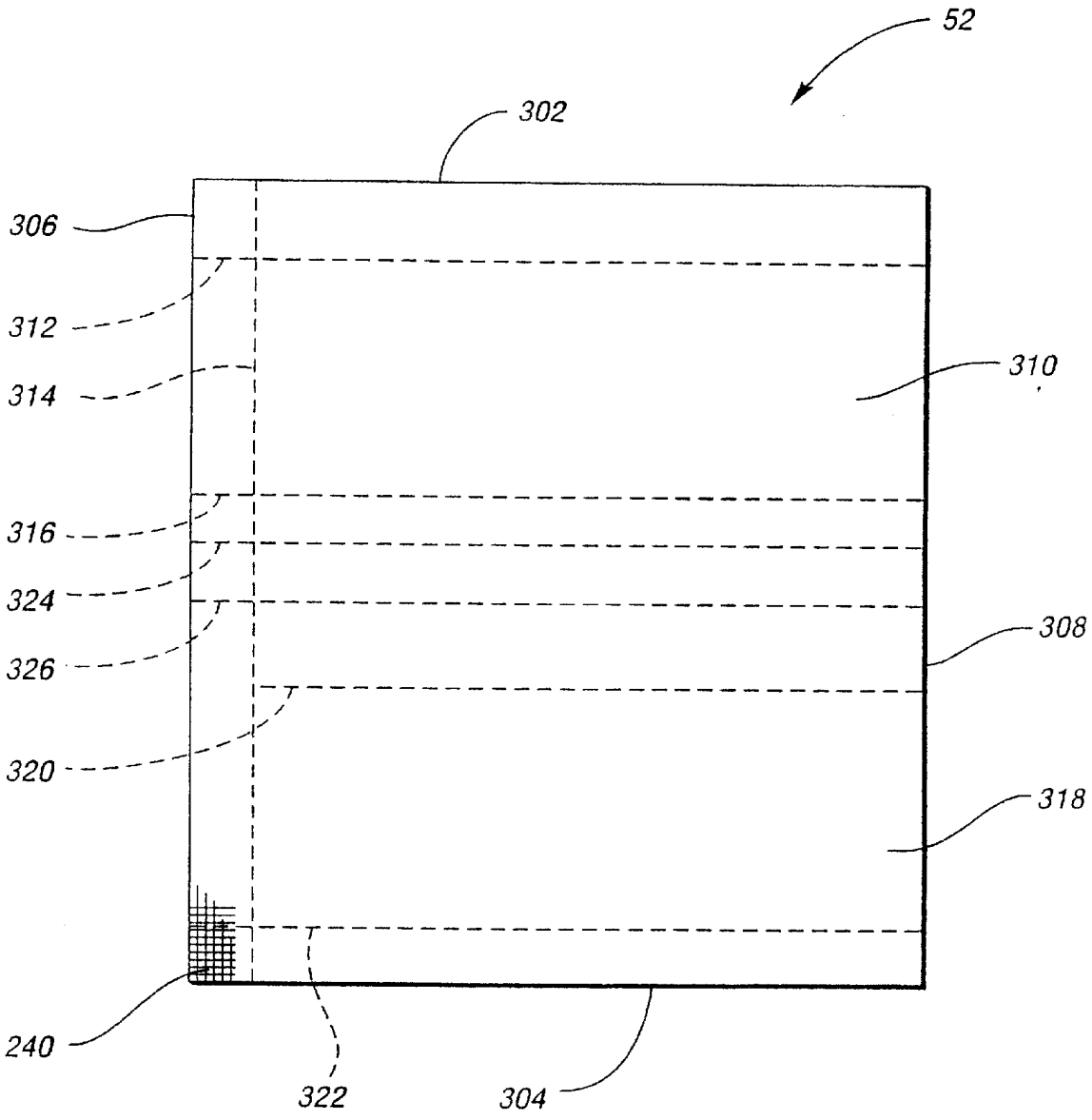
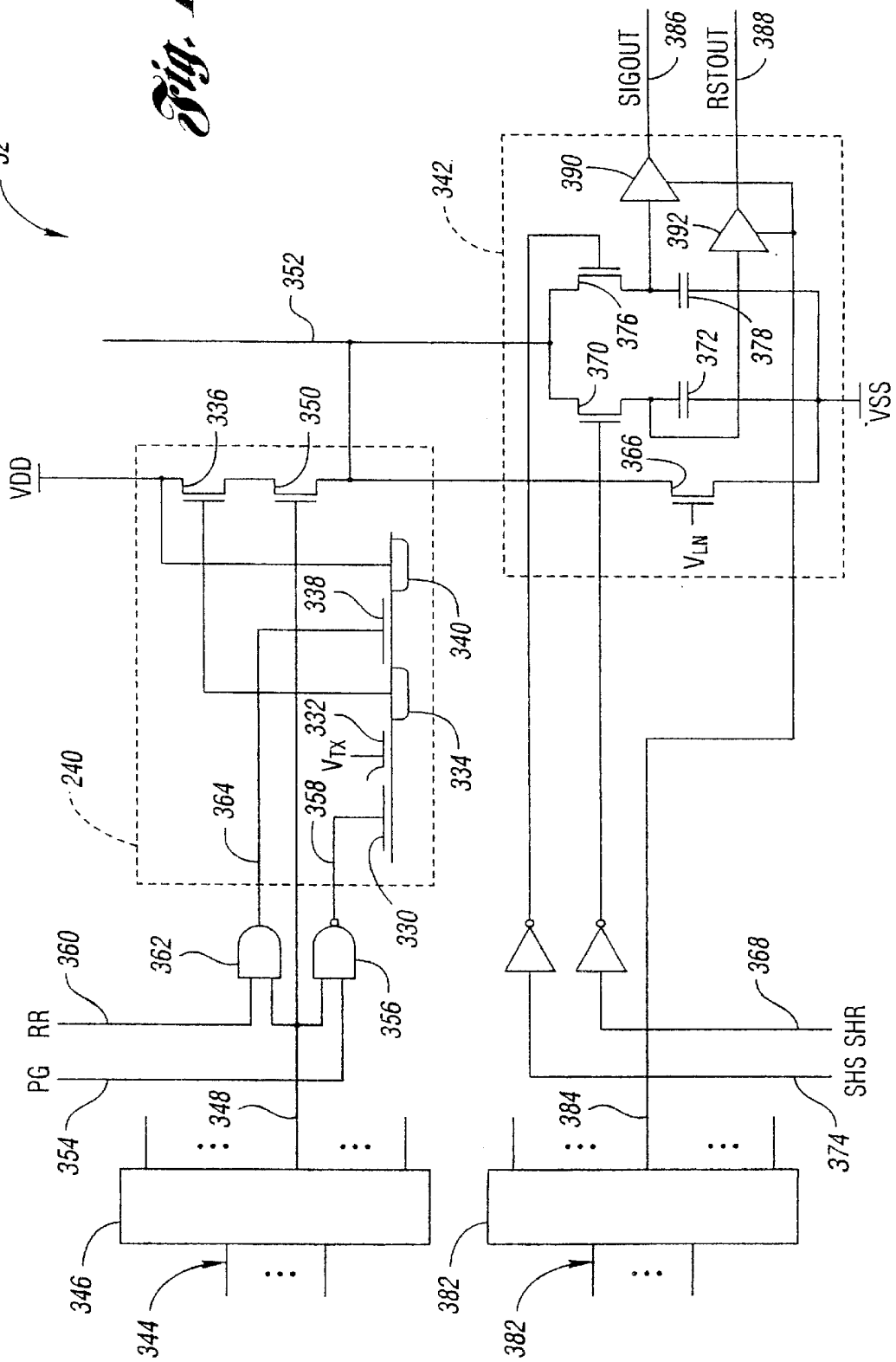


Fig. 15

Fig. 16


52
342
352
SIGOUT
386
RSTOUT
388
390
392
376
378
370
372
VSS
336
350
VDD
366
V_{LN}
338
340
332
V_{TX}
334
240
364
358
330
360
362
356
RR
PG
368
SHS SHR
348
354
384
374
346
344
382
382

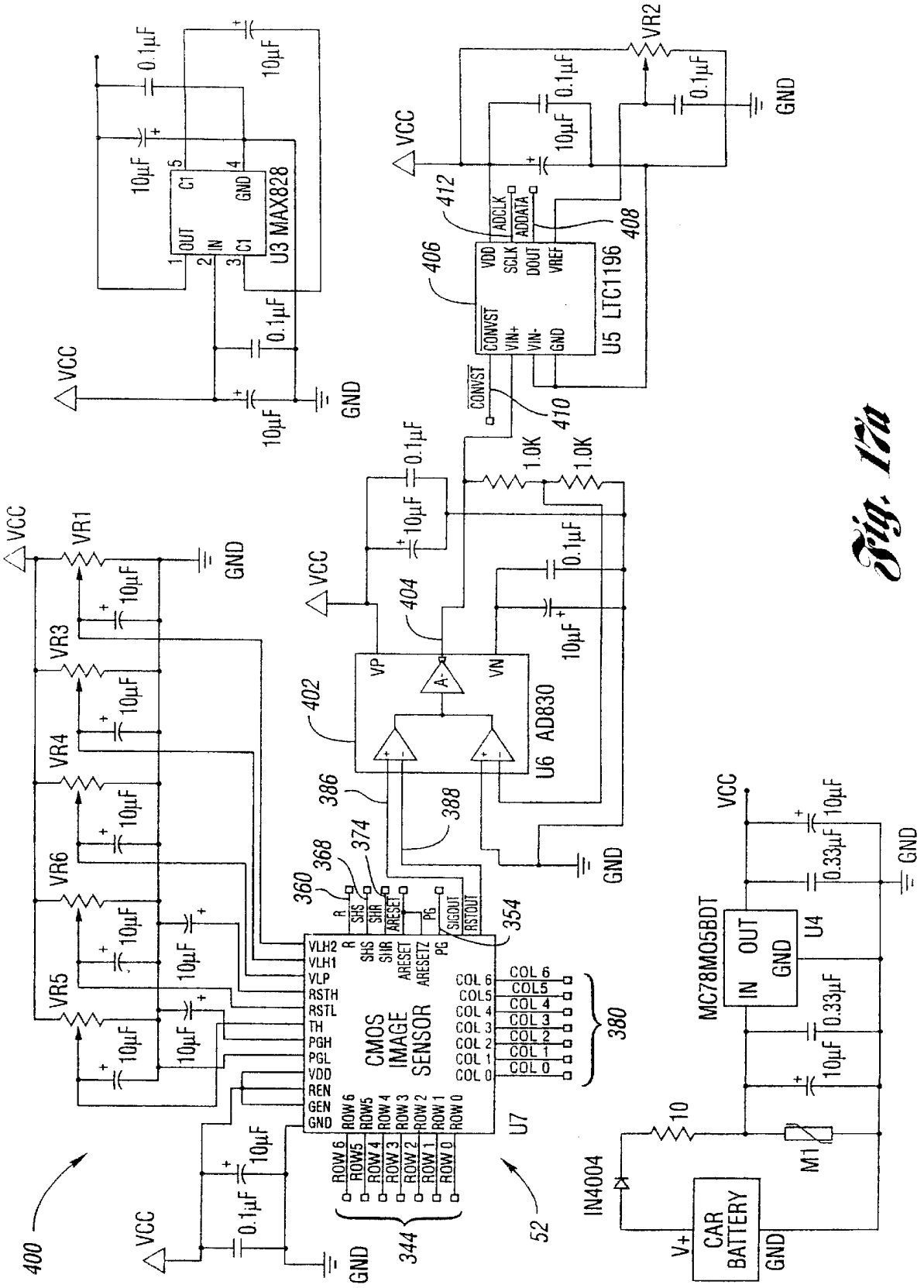

U3 MAX828
U5 LTC1196
U6 AD830
U7
CMOS IMAGE SENSOR
MC78M05BDT
U4
IN4004
CAR BATTERY
VCC
GND
VR1
VR2
VR3
VR4
VR5
VR6
10µF
0.1µF
0.33µF
1.0K
10
400
52
344
354
360
368
374
380
386
388
402
404
406
408
410
412

Fig. 17a

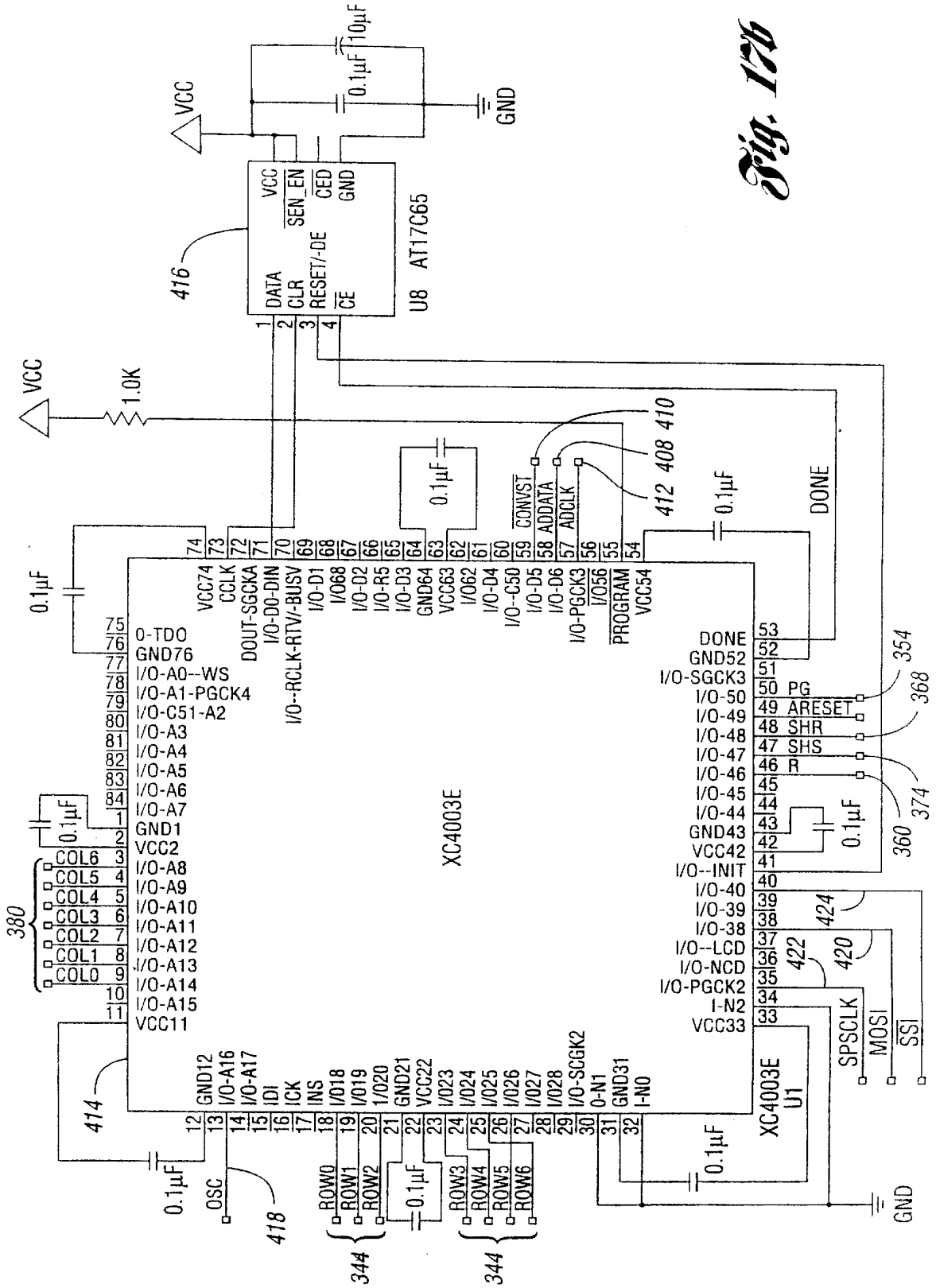

VCC
GND
0.1µF
10µF
U8 AT17C65
DATA
CLR
RESET/-OE
CE
VCC
SEN_EN
CED
GND
416
1.0K
410
408
412
DONE
XC4003E
XC4003E U1
0-TDO
GND76
I/O-A0--WS
I/O-A1-PGCK4
I/O-C51-A2
I/O-A3
I/O-A4
I/O-A5
I/O-A6
I/O-A7
GND1
VCC2
I/O-A8
I/O-A9
I/O-A10
I/O-A11
I/O-A12
I/O-A13
I/O-A14
I/O-A15
VCC11
COL6
COL5
COL4
COL3
COL2
COL1
COL0
380
414
418
OSC
344
ROW0
ROW1
ROW2
ROW3
ROW4
ROW5
ROW6
DONE
GND52
I/O-SGCK3
I/O-50
I/O-49
I/O-48
I/O-47
I/O-46
I/O-45
I/O-44
GND43
VCC42
I/O--INIT
I/O-40
I/O-39
I/O-38
I/O--LCD
I/O-NCD
I/O-PGCK2
I-N2
VCC33
PG
ARESET
SHR
SHS
R
354
368
374
360
424
422
420
SPSCLK
MOSI
SSI

Fig. 17b

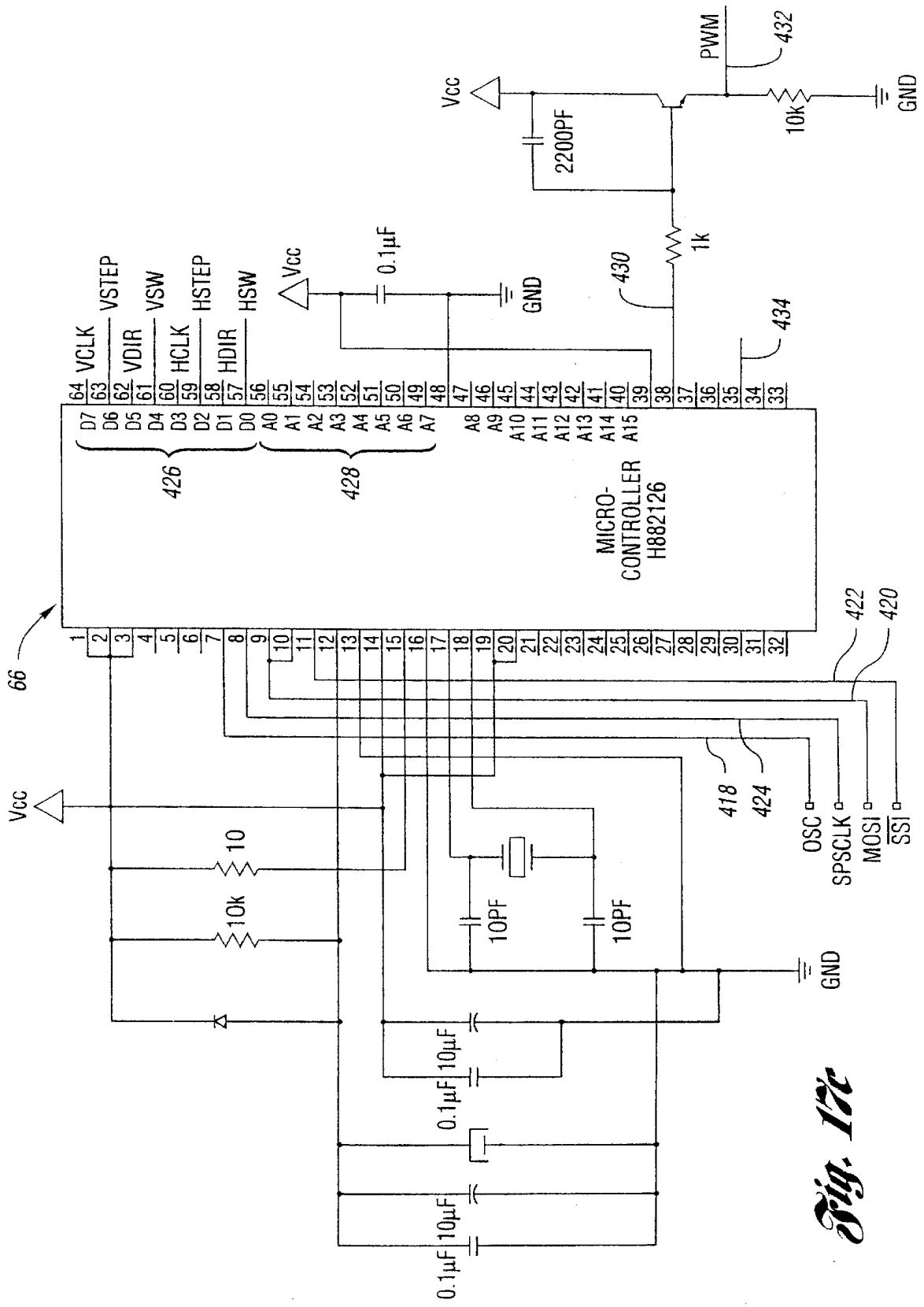

Vcc
PWM
432
2200PF
10k
GND
1k
430
0.1µF
Vcc
GND
434
VSTEP
VSW
HSTEP
HSW
VCLK
VDIR
HCLK
HDIR
426
428
MICRO-
CONTROLLER
H882126
66
422
420
418
424
OSC
SPSCLK
MOSI
SSI
Vcc
10
10k
10PF
10PF
GND
0.1µF
10µF
0.1µF
10µF
0.1µF

Fig. 12

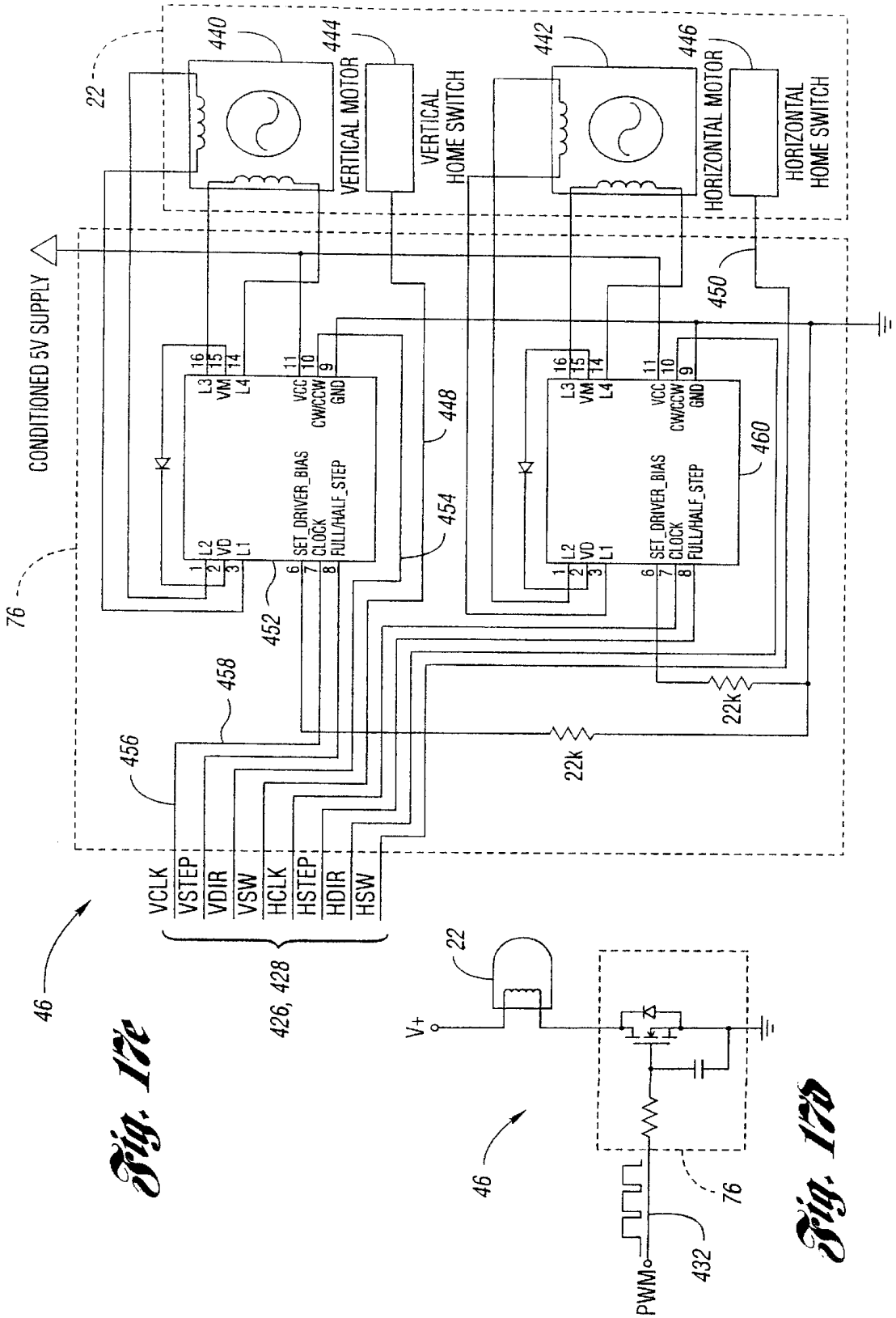


Fig. 17a

Fig. 17b

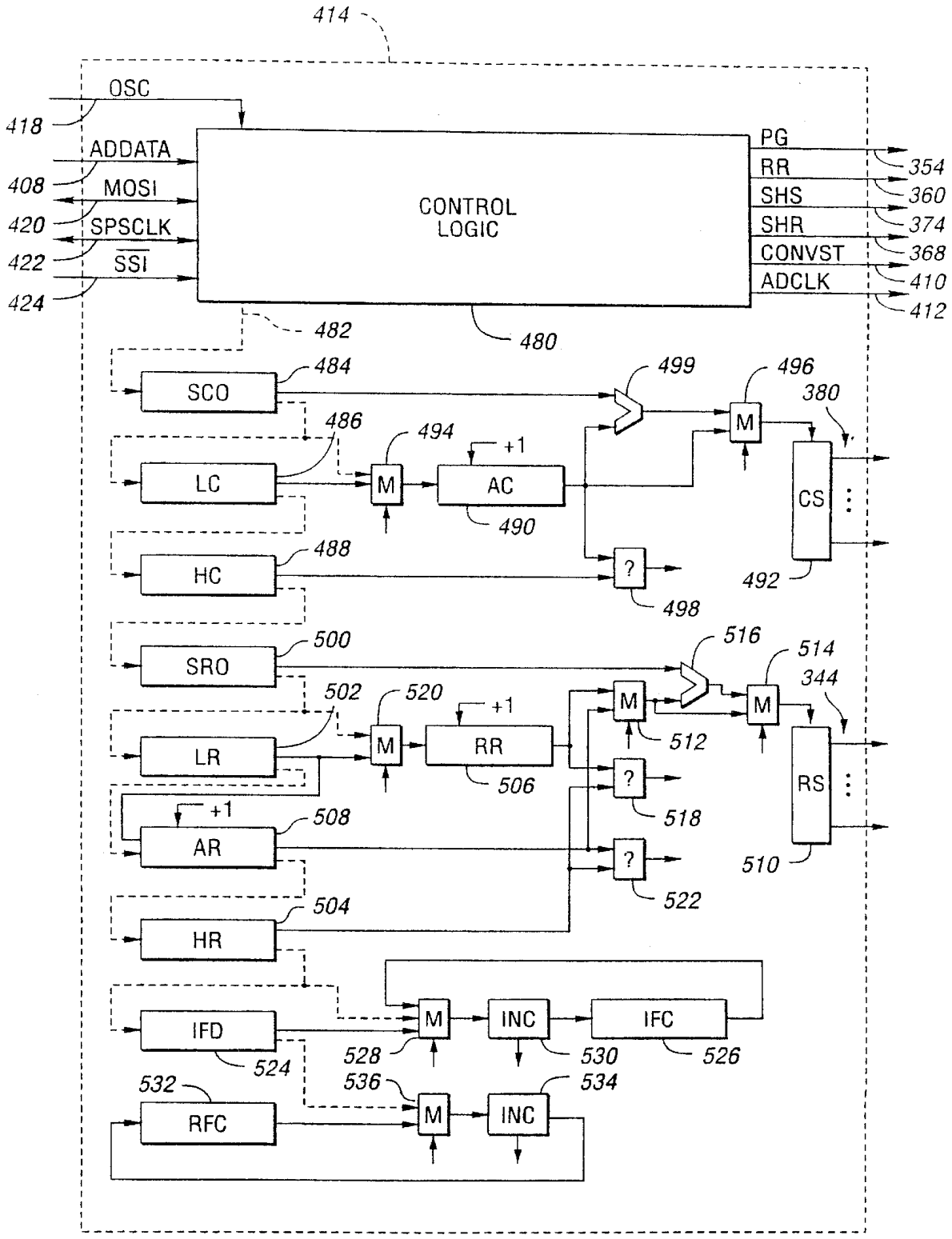

414
OSC
418
ADDATA
408
MOSI
420
SPSCLK
422
SSI
424
CONTROL LOGIC
PG
RR
SHS
SHR
CONVST
ADCLK
354
360
374
368
410
412
482
480
SCO
484
499
496
380
LC
486
494
+1
M
AC
490
CS
HC
488
?
498
492
SRO
500
516
514
344
LR
502
520
+1
RR
506
512
RS
AR
508
518
510
HR
504
522
IFD
524
528
INC
530
IFC
526
RFC
532
536
534

Fig. 18

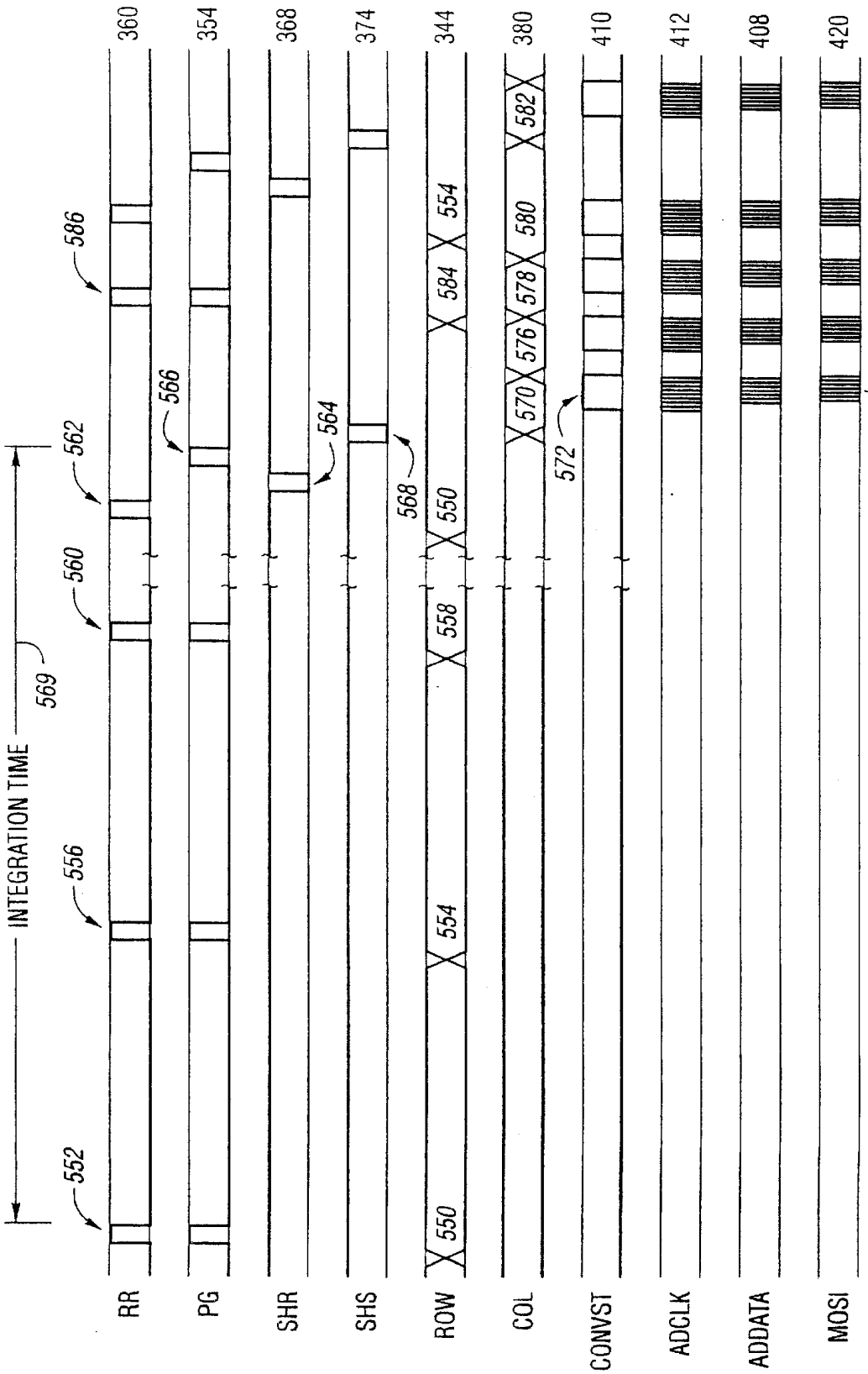

INTEGRATION TIME
569
RR
PG
SHR
SHS
ROW
COL
CONVST
ADCLK
ADDATA
MOSI
360
354
368
374
344
380
410
412
408
420
552
556
560
562
586
566
564
568
550
554
558
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582
584
572
574

Fig. 19

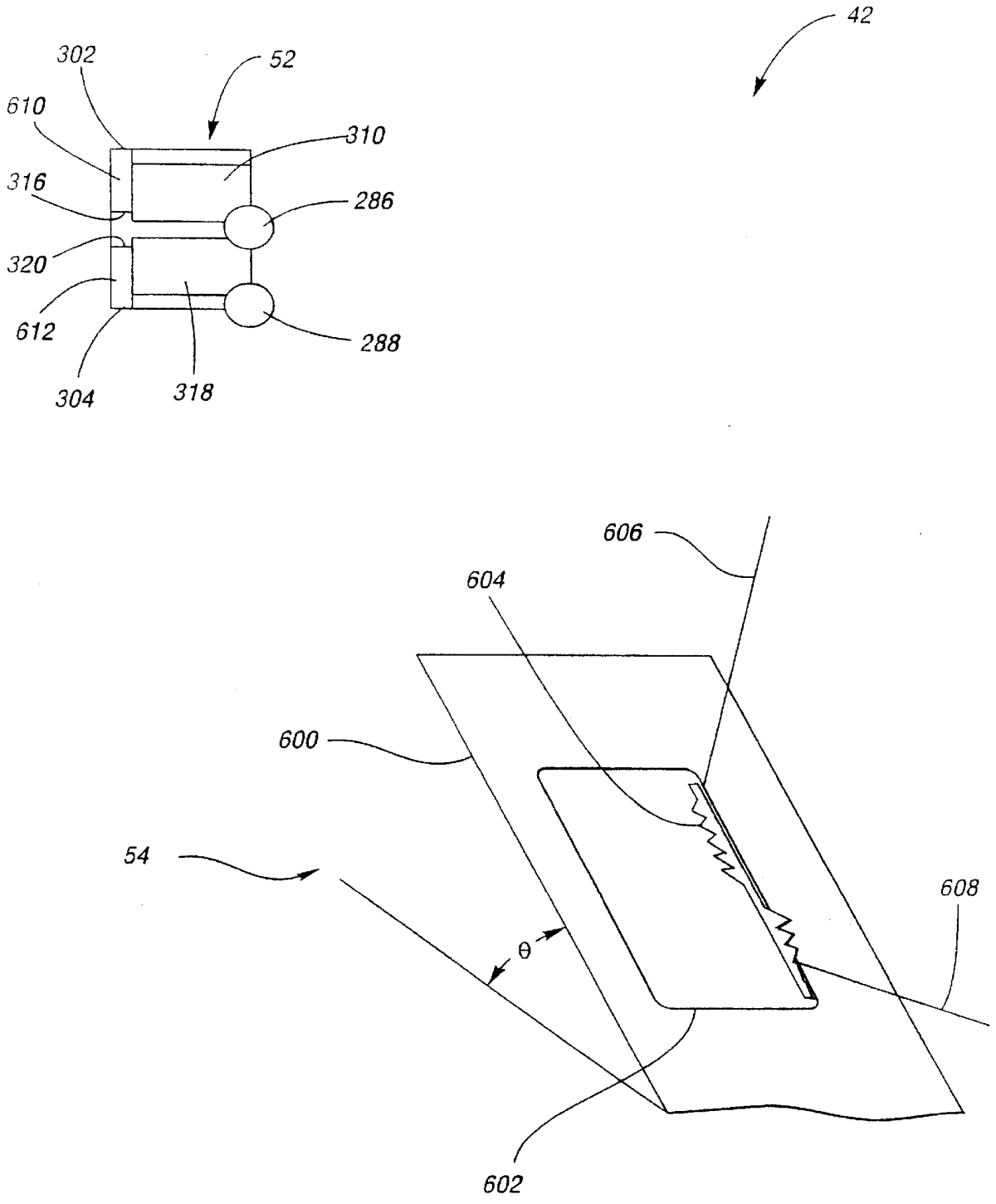
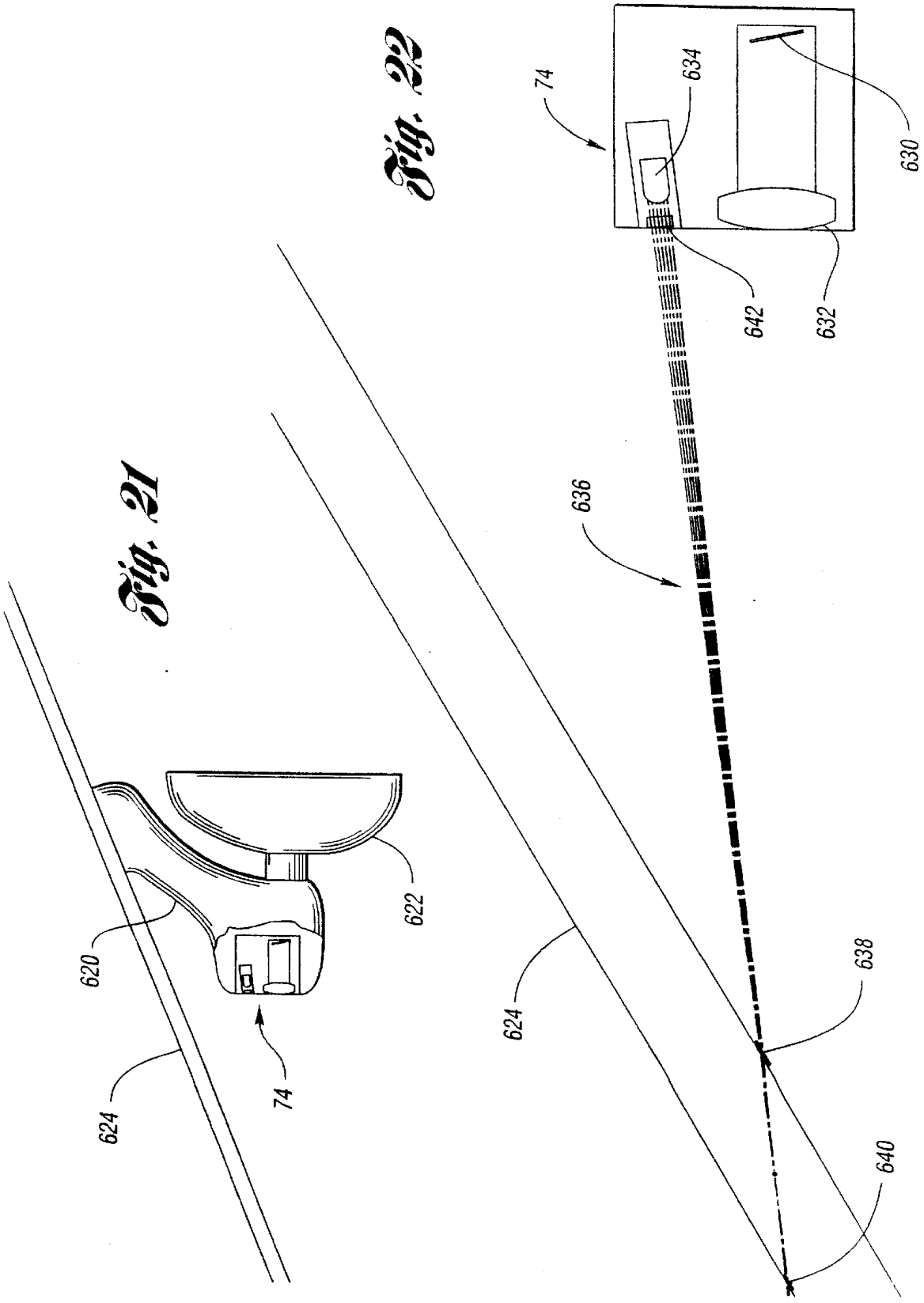

42
302
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Fig. 20


Fig. 21
620
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Fig. 22
74
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642
632
636
624
638
640

CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE HEADLAMP CONTROL

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/157,063, entitled "CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE HEADLAMP CONTROL," filed on Sep. 18, 1998, on behalf of Joseph S. Stam et al., now U.S. Pat. No. 6,049,171, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to automatically controlling continuously variable headlamps to prevent excessive glare seen by drivers in front of the headlamps.

BACKGROUND ART

Recently, headlamps producing a continuously variable illumination range have become available. The illumination range may be varied by one or both of changing the intensity of light and changing the direction of light emitted by the headlamps.

Varying headlamp illumination intensity can be accomplished in several different means. A first means is to provide a pulse width modulated (PWM) signal to the headlamp. By varying the duty cycle of headlamp power, the headlamp illumination intensity can be increased or decreased. This may be accomplished by providing a PWM signal from a control system to a high power field effect transistor (FET) in series with the headlamp bulb.

Another means of varying the power duty cycle of a headlamp is to provide a PWM signal to a lamp driver integrated circuit such as a Motorola MC33286. This integrated circuit provides the added advantage of limiting the maximum inrush current to the headlamp, thus potentially extending the life of the headlamp bulb.

Yet another means of varying headlamp illumination uses high intensity discharge (HID) headlamps. HID lamps are a new, highly efficient headlamp technology. The ballasts used to power HID headlamps can be directly supplied with a control signal to vary headlamp illumination intensity.

Still another means to vary the illumination intensity of a headlamp is to provide an attenuating filter to absorb some of the light emitted from the headlamp. An electrochromic filter may be placed in front of the headlamp. By controlling the voltage applied to the electrochromic filter, the amount of light absorbed and, hence, the emitted illumination level, can be varied.

There are also several means available for changing the direction of light emitted from headlamps. Headlamp aim can be varied using actuators to move the headlamp housing relative to the vehicle. Typically, these actuators are electric motors such as stepper motors.

For headlamps with appropriately designed reflectors, mechanically moving the light source relative to the reflector can change headlamp beam direction as well as headlamp illumination intensity.

HID headlamps provide several additional methods of aiming the headlamp beam. Some of these methods involve deflecting or perturbing the arc in such away as to vary the lamp output. U.S. Pat. No. 5,508,592 entitled "Method For Deflecting The Arc Of An Electrodeless HID Lamp" to W. Lapatovich, S. Butler, J. Bochinski, and H. Goss, which is hereby incorporated by reference, describes exciting the HID lamp with a high-frequency radio signal. Modulating the signal causes the lamp to operate at an acoustic resonance point, perturbing the arc from its quiescent position. An alternative technique, known as magnetodynamic positioning (MDP), uses a magnetic field to shape the HID arc. MDP is being developed by Osram Sylvania Inc. of Danvers, Massachusetts.

A collection of methods for implementing continuously variable headlamps is described in Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) publication SP-1323 entitled "Automotive Lighting Technology", which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Automatic control of continuously variable headlamps offers several potential benefits over automatic control of traditional on-off headlamps. Greater flexibility for illumination is available, allowing headlamp illumination to be better adapted to driving conditions. Also, continuously varying the headlamp illumination does not create rapid changes in illumination that may startle the driver. Various methods have been devised to control both continuously variable and conventional discreet headlamps. One of the oldest methods is to aim the headlamp in the same direction as steered wheels. Another method increases the illumination range in proportion to increasing vehicle speed.

Still another method of controlling headlamps has been developed for HID lamps. The increased brightness and blueish color of the HID lamps is particularly disrupting to oncoming drivers. Due to this disruptness effect, certain European countries require headlamp leveling systems if HID lamps are used on a vehicle. These headlamp leveling systems detect the pitch of the vehicle relative to the road and adjust the vertical aim of the headlamps accordingly. Advanced systems further use the speed of the vehicle to anticipate small pitch disturbances caused by acceleration.

One problem with current continuously variable headlamp control systems is the inability to consider oncoming or leading vehicles in determining the illumination range of headlamps. One prior art device is expressed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,967,319 entitled "Headlight Apparatus For Automotive Vehicle" by Y. Seko. This device utilizes vehicle speed along with the output from a five-element linear optical sensor array directly coupled to a headlamp. The headlamp incorporates motor drives to adjust the elevational angle of illumination beams. This design requires separate sensing and control system for each headlamp or suggests as an alternative a controlled headlamp only on the side of the vehicle facing opposing traffic. This design presents many problems. First, the optical sensor and associated electronics are in close proximity to the hot headlamp. Second, placing the image sensor on the lower front portion of the vehicle may result in imaging surfaces being coated with dirt and debris. Third, placing the image sensor close to the headlamp beam makes the system subject to the masking effects of scattered light from fog, snow, rain, or dust particles in the air. Fourth, this system has no color discriminating capability and, with only five pixels of resolution, the imaging system is incapable of accurately determining lateral and elevational locations of headlamps or tail lights at any distance.

What is needed is control of continuously variable headlamps based on detection of oncoming headlamps and leading tail lights at distances where headlamp illumination would create excessive glare for the drivers of oncoming and leading vehicles.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to control continuously variable headlamps based on detected headlamps from

oncoming vehicles and tail lights from leading vehicles. The control system should determine the proper aim of headlamps in steerable headlamp systems and should determine the proper intensity of headlamps in variable intensity headlamp systems. Gradual changes in the region of headlamp illumination should be supported. The control system should also operate correctly over a wide range of ambient lighting conditions.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a headlamp control system which determines the proper aim of headlamps in steerable headlamp systems.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a headlamp control system which varies the intensity of headlamp beams continuously in response to detected oncoming and leading vehicles.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a headlamp control system wherein the transition from high beam to low beam or from low beam to high beam is gradual and thus not startling to the vehicle driver.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide control of continuously variable headlamps over a wide range of ambient lighting conditions

In carrying out the above objects and features of the present invention, a method for controlling continuously variable headlamps is provided. The method includes detecting an ambient light level. The continuously variable headlamps are set to daylightmode if the ambient light level is greater than a first threshold. The headlamps are set to low beam mode if the ambient light level is less than the first threshold but greater than a second threshold. Automatic headlamp dimming is enabled if the ambient light level is less than the second threshold.

In an embodiment of the present invention, automatic headlamp dimming includes obtaining an image in front of the headlamps. The image covers a glare area including points at which a driver in a vehicle in front of the headlamps would perceive the continuously variable headlamps as causing excessive glare if the headlamps were at full range. The image is processed to determine if the vehicle is within the glare area. If the vehicle is within the glare area, the continuously variable headlamp illumination range is reduced. Otherwise, the continuously variable headlamps are set to full illumination range. In various refinements, the continuously variable illumination range may be modified by changing the intensity of light emitted, by changing the direction of light emitted, or both.

In another embodiment of the present invention, reducing the continuously variable headlamp illumination range includes incrementally decreasing the illumination range. Obtaining the image, processing the image, and incrementally decreasing illumination range are repeated until the illumination range produces a level of illumination at the oncoming or leading vehicle position that would not be perceived as causing excessive glare by the driver in the vehicle in front of the continuously variable headlamps.

In still another embodiment of the present invention, the ambient light level is determined by a multipixel image sensor having an elevational angle relative to the controlled vehicle having continuously variable headlamps. The method includes acquiring a sequence of images, finding a stationary light source in each image, calculating a measure of elevation for the stationary light source in each image, and determining the elevational angle based on the calculated measures of elevation.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, the full illumination range is reduced if at least one form of precipitation such as fog, rain, snow, and the like is detected.

In a still further embodiment of the present invention, each continuously variable headlamp has an effective illumination range varied by changing vertical direction aimed. Each effective illumination range has an elevational direction corresponding to an upper extent of the headlamp beam bright portion. The method further includes acquiring a sequence of images. The elevational direction is determined for at least one continuously variable headlamp in each image of the sequence. A determination is then made as to whether or not the sequence of images was taken during travel over a relatively straight, uniform surface. If so, the determined elevational directions are averaged to obtain an estimate of actual elevational direction.

A system for controlling at least one continuously variable headlamp on a controlled vehicle is also provided. Each continuously variable headlamp has an effective illumination range varied by changing at least one parameter from a set including horizontal direction aimed, vertical direction aimed, and intensity emitted. The system includes an imaging system capable of determining lateral and elevational locations of headlamps from oncoming vehicles and tail lamps from leading vehicles. The system also includes a control unit that can acquire an image from in front of the at least one headlamp. The image covers a glare area including points at which the driver of a vehicle in front of the headlamps would perceive the headlamps as causing excessive glare. The image is processed to determine if at least one vehicle including oncoming vehicles and leading vehicles is within the glare area. If at least one vehicle is within the glare area, the headlamp illumination range is reduced. Otherwise, the headlamp illumination range is set to full illumination range.

In an embodiment of the present invention, the controlled vehicle has at least one low beam headlamp with variable intensity and at least one high beam headlamp with variable intensity. The control unit reduces the illumination range by decreasing the intensity of the high beam headlamp while increasing the intensity of the low beam headlamp.

In another embodiment of the present invention wherein headlamps produce illumination through heating at least one filament the control unit causes a low amount of current to flow through each filament when the controlled vehicle engine is running and when the headlamp containing the filament is not controlled to emit light. The low amount of current heating the filament decreases filament brittleness thereby prolonging filament life.

In still another embodiment of the present invention, the imaging system is incorporated into the rearview mirror mount. The imaging system is aimed through a portion of the controlled vehicle windshield cleaned by a windshield wiper.

In yet another embodiment of the present invention, the controlled vehicle has a headlamp with a variable vertical aim direction. The system further includes at least one sensor for determining vehicle pitch relative to the road surface. The control unit aims the headlamp to compensate for controlled vehicle pitch variations. In a refinement, the controlled vehicle includes a speed sensor.

The control unit anticipates controlled vehicle pitch changes based on changes in controlled vehicle speed.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, the controlled vehicle includes headlamps with variable horizontal aim direction. The control unit determines if a leading vehicle is in a curb lane on the opposite side of the controlled vehicle from oncoming traffic and is in the glare area. If no leading vehicle is in one of the curb lanes, headlamp

illumination range is reduced by aiming the headlamps away from the direction of oncoming traffic.

In a still further embodiment of the present invention, the control unit reduces headlamp illumination range at a predetermined rate over a predetermined transition time.

A system is also provided for controlling at least one continuously variable headlamp having an effective illumination range varied by changing vertical direction aimed. Each effective illumination range has an elevational direction corresponding to an upper extent of the headlamp beam bright portion. The system includes an imaging system capable of determining lateral and elevational locations of headlamps from oncoming vehicles. The imaging system is mounted a vertical distance above each headlamp. The system also includes a control unit for acquiring an image in front of the headlamps. The image covers a glare area including points at which the driver of the oncoming vehicle would perceive the continuously variable headlamps to cause excessive glare. The image is processed to determine if at least one oncoming vehicle is within the glare area. If at least oncoming vehicle is within the glare area, the elevational angle between the imaging system and the headlamps of each of the at least one oncoming vehicles is determined. If at least one oncoming vehicle is within the glare area, the continuously variable headlamps are aimed such that the elevational direction is substantially parallel with a line between the imaging system and the headlamps of the oncoming vehicle producing the greatest of the determined elevational angles.

A system is further provided for controlling continuously variable headlamps. The system includes at least one moisture sensor for detecting at least one form of precipitation such as fog, rain, and snow. The system also includes a control unit to reduce the headlamp full illumination range when precipitation is detected.

The above objects and other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention are readily apparent from the following detailed description of the best modes for carrying out the invention when taken in connection with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a diagram showing a continuously variable headlamp illumination range together with oncoming and leading vehicles;

FIG. **2** is a block diagram of a control system according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **3** is a flow diagram of a method for controlling continuously variable headlamps in different ambient lighting conditions according to the present invention;

FIG. **4** is a flow diagram of automatic headlamp dimming according to the present invention;

FIG. **5** is a flow chart of a method for detecting tail lamps according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **6** is a flow chart of a method for detecting headlamps according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **7** is a schematic diagram illustrating reduction of headlamp illumination range according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **8** is a flow diagram of an alternative method for reducing headlamp illumination range according to the present invention;

FIG. **9** is an illustration of street lamp imaging according to the present invention;

FIGS. **10***a* and **10***b* are schematic diagrams of apparent street light elevational angle as a function of camera-to-vehicle inclination angle;

FIG. **11** is a schematic diagram illustrating street lamp elevational angle calculation according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **12** is a graph illustrating street lamp elevational angles for three different camera-to-vehicle inclination angles;

FIG. **13** is a flow diagram of a method for calculating camera-to-vehicle inclination angle according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **14** is an imaging system that may be used to implement the present invention;

FIG. **15** is a schematic diagram of image array sensor subwindows that may be used to implement the present invention;

FIG. **16** is a schematic diagram of an embodiment of an image array sensor that may be used to implement the present invention;

FIGS. **17***a* through **17***e* are a schematic diagram of an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **18** is a block diagram illustrating registers and associated logic used to control the image control sensor according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **19** is a timing diagram illustrating image array sensor control signals for the logic in FIG. **18**;

FIG. **20** is an ambient light sensor that may be used to implement the present invention;

FIG. **21** is a diagram illustrating mounting of a moisture sensor that may be used to implement the present invention; and

FIG. **22** is a diagram illustrating operation of a moisture sensor that may be used to implement the present invention.

BEST MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

Referring now to FIG. **1**, a continuously variable headlamp illumination range together with oncoming and leading vehicles are shown. Controlled vehicle **20** includes at least one continuously variable headlamp **22**. Each headlamp **22** produces a variable region of bright light known as illumination range **24**. A driver in oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28** that is within illumination range **24** may view headlamps as producing excessive glare. This glare may make it difficult for the driver of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28** to see objects on the road, to read vehicle instruments, and to readjust to night viewing conditions once vehicle **26**, **28** is outside of illumination range **24**. Hence, illuminaton range **24** is perceived as a glare area by the driver of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28**.

The present invention attempts to reduce the level of glare seen by the driver of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28** by providing a control system that detects oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28** and reduces illumination range **24** accordingly.

Referring now to FIG. **2**, a block diagram of a control system according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. A control system for continuously variable headlamps, shown generally by **40**, includes imaging system **42**, control unit **44** and at least one continuously variable headlamp system **46**. Imaging system **42** includes vehicle imaging lens system **48** operative to focus light **50** from a region generally in front of controlled vehicle **20** onto image array sensor **52**. Imaging system **42** is capable of determining lateral and elevational locations of headlamps from oncoming vehicles **26** and leading vehicles **28**. In a preferred

embodiment of the present invention, vehicle imaging lens system **48** includes two lens systems, one lens system having a red filter and one lens system having a cyan filter. Lens system **48** permits image array sensor **52** to simultaneously view a red image and a cyan image of the same region in front of controlled vehicle **20**. Image array sensor **52** is preferably comprised of an array of pixel sensors. Further details regarding vehicle imaging lens system **48** and image array sensor **52** are described with regards to FIGS. **14** through **16** below.

In a preferred embodiment, imaging system **42** includes ambient light lens system **54** operable to gather light **56** over a wide range of elevational angles for viewing by a portion of image array sensor **52**. Ambient light lens system **54** is described with regards to FIG. **20** below. Alternatively, light **50** focused through vehicle imaging lens system **48** may be used to determine ambient light levels. Alternatively, a light sensor completely separate from imaging system **42** may be used to determine ambient light levels.

In a preferred embodiment, imaging system **42** is incorporated into the interior rearview mirror mount. Imaging system **42** is aimed through a portion of the windshield of controlled vehicle **20** cleaned by at least one windshield wiper.

Control unit **44** accepts pixel gray scale levels **58** and generates image sensor control signals **60** and headlamp illumination control signals **62**. Control unit **44** includes imaging array control and analog-to-digital converter (ADC) **64** and processor **66**. Processor **66** receives digitized image data from and sends control information to imaging array control and ADC **64** via serial link **68**. A preferred embodiment for control unit **44** is described with regards to FIGS. **17** through **19** below.

Control system **40** may include vehicle pitch sensors **70** to detect the pitch angle of controlled vehicle **20** relative to the road surface. Typically, two vehicle pitch sensors **70** are required. Each sensor is mounted on the chassis of controlled vehicle **20** near the front or rear axle. A sensor element is fixed to the axle. As the axle moves relative to the chassis, sensor **70** measures either rotational or linear displacement. To provide additional information, control unit **44** may also be connected to vehicle speed sensor **72**.

Control system **40** may include one or more moisture sensors **74**. Precipitation such as fog, rain, or snow may cause excessive light from headlamps **22** to be reflected back to the driver of controlled vehicle **20**. Precipitation may also decrease the range at which oncoming vehicles **26** and leading vehicles **28** may be detected. Input from moisture sensor **74** may therefore be used to decrease the full range of illumination range **24**. A moisture sensor that may be used to implement the present invention is described with regards to FIGS. **21** and **22** below.

Each continuously variable headlamp **22** is controlled by at least one headlamp controller **76**. Each headlamp controller **76** accepts headlamp illumination control signals **62** from control unit **44** and affects headlamp **22** accordingly to modify illumination range **24** of light **78** leaving headlamp **22**. Depending on the type of continuously variable headlamp **22** used, headlamp controller **76** may vary the intensity of light **78** leaving headlamp **22**, may vary the direction of light **78** leaving headlamp **22**, or both. Examples of circuits that may be used for headlamp controller **76** are described with regards to FIGS. **17***d* and **17***e* below.

In one embodiment of the present invention, control unit **44** can acquire an image covering a glare area including points at which a driver of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28** would perceive headlamps **22** to cause excessive glare. Control unit **44** process the image to determine if at least one vehicle **26,28** is within the glare area. If at least one vehicle is within the glare area, control unit **44** reduces illumination range **24**. Otherwise, headlamps **22** are set to full illumination range **24**.

In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, reductions to illumination range **24** and setting headlamps **22** to full illumination range **24** occurs gradually. Sharp transitions in illumination range **24** may startle the driver of controlled vehicle **20** since the driver may not be aware of the precise switching time. A transition time of between one and two seconds is desired for returning to full illumination range **24** from dimmed illumination range **24** corresponding to low beam headlamps. Such soft transitions in illumination range **24** also allow control system **40** to recover from a false detection of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28**. Since image acquisition time is approximately 30 ms, correction may occur without the driver of controlled vehicle **20** noticing any change.

For controlled vehicle **20** with both high beam and low beam headlamps **22**, reducing illumination range **24** may be accomplished by decreasing the intensity of high beam headlamps **22** while increasing the intensity of low beam headlamps **22**. Alternately, low beam headlamps can be left on continuously for ambient light levels fall below a certain threshold.

For controlled vehicle **20** with at least one headlamp **22** having a variable horizontal aimed direction, the aim of headlamp **22** may be moved away from the direction of oncoming vehicle **26** when illumination range **24** is reduced. This allows the driver of controlled vehicle **22** to better see the edge of the road, road signs, pedestrians, animals, and the like that may be on the curb side of controlled vehicle **22**. In a preferred embodiment, control unit **44** may determine if any leading vehicle **28** is in a curb lane on the opposite side of controlled vehicle **20** from oncoming traffic and is in the glare area, if not, reducing illumination range **24** includes aiming headlamps **22** away from the direction of oncoming traffic. If a leading vehicle is detected in a curb lane, illumination range **24** is reduced without changing the horizontal aim of headlamps **22**.

Referring now to FIG. **3**, a flow diagram of a method for controlling continuously variable headlamps in different ambient lighting conditions according to the present invention is shown. For FIG. **3** and for each additional flow diagram shown, operations are not necessarily sequential operations. Similarly, operations may be performed by software, hardware, or a combination of both, The present invention transcends any particular implementation and aspects are shown in sequential flow chart form for ease of illustration.

During twilight, different drivers or automated headlamp systems will turn on headlamps and running lights at different times. Since the present invention relies on detecting headlamps of oncoming vehicles **26** and tail lamps of leading vehicles **28**, there may be a period of time between when controlled vehicle **20** has headlamps tuned on and when vehicles **26,28** can be detected. To accommodate various ambient light conditions at which headlamps and tail lamps of vehicles **26,28** may be turned on, an embodiment of the present invention uses two thresholds for system operation.

The ambient light level is detected in block **90**. In block **92**, the ambient light level is compared to a day threshold. When the ambient light level is greater than the day

threshold, headlamps are set to daylight mode in block **94**. Daylight mode may include turning on daylight running lamps (DRLs).

In an embodiment of the present invention wherein controlled vehicle includes headlamps, such as continuously variable headlamps **22**, which produce illumination by heating at least one filament, the effective filament life may be extended by causing a low amount of current to flow through the element when the headlamp is not controlled to emit light. The amount of current is large enough to heat the filament without causing the filament to emit light. This heating makes the filament less brittle and, hence, less susceptible to shock and vibration damage.

When ambient light levels fall below the day threshold, the ambient light level is compared to the night threshold in block **96**. If the ambient light level is less than the day threshold but greater than the night threshold, headlamps are set to low beam mode in block **98**. In low beam mode, either standard low beam headlamps may be turned on or continuously variable headlamps **22** may be set to an illumination range **24** corresponding to a low beam pattern. Running lights including tail lamps may also be turned on.

When ambient light levels fall below the night threshold level, automatic headlamp dimring is enabled in block **100**. During automatic headlamp dimming mode, control unit **44** acquires an image in front of headlamps **22**. The image covers the glare area including points at which the drivers of oncoming vehicles **26** or leading vehicles **28** would perceive headlamps **22** to cause excessive glare. Control unit **44** processes the image to determine if any vehicles **26,28** are within the glare area. If at least one vehicle **26,28** is within the glare area, control unit **44** reduces headlamp illumination range **24**. Otherwise, headlamp illumination range **24** is set to full illumination range.

Several benefits, in addition to reducing glare seen by drivers of oncoming vehicles **26** and leading vehicles **28**, are achieved by the present invention. Studies have shown that many drivers rarely use high beams either out of fear of forgetting to dim the high beams, out of unfamiliarity with high beam controls, or due to preoccupation with other aspects of driving. By automatically providing the full range of illumination when oncoming vehicles **26** and leading vehicles **28** are not present, the driver of controlled vehicle **20** will experience greater visibility.

Another benefit achieved by the present invention is the ability to illuminate areas in front of controlled vehicle **20** currently not legally permitted. Current limitations on high beam aiming are based, in part, on not completely blinding the drivers of oncoming vehicles **26** if the high beams are not dimmed. Using control system **40**, illumination range **24** may be expanded to better illuminate overhead and roadside signs, greatly aiding in night navigation. Because the present invention automatically decreases illumination range **24** due to an approaching oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28**, the risk of temporarily blinding the driver of vehicles **26,28** is greatly reduced.

Referring now to FIG. **4**, a flow diagram of automatic headlamp dimming according to the present invention is shown. The methods described in FIGS. **4** through **6** are more fully described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,837,994 entitled "Control System to Automatically Dim Vehicle Head Lamps" by J. Stam, J. Bechtel, and J. Roberts, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Control unit **44** is used to acquire and examine images obtained through imaging system **42** to detect the presence of vehicles **26,28**. An image is acquired through the cyan filter in block **110**. A loop, governed by block **112**, selects the next pixel to be processed. The next pixel is processed in block **114** to detect the presence of headlamps. A method for detecting the presence of headlamps is described with regards to FIG. **6** below. A check is made to determine if any headlamps for oncoming vehicles **26** are found in block **116**. Generally, headlamps of oncoming vehicles **26** appear much brighter than tail lamps of leading vehicles **28**. Hence, the gain for images used to search for tail lamps is greater than the gain-used to search for headlamp images. Therefore, headlamps of oncoming vehicles **26** appearing in an image used to search for tail lamps may wash out the image. If no headlamps are found, images are acquired through cyan and red filters in block **118**. A loop, governed by block **120**, is used to select each image pixel through the red filter and corresponding image pixel through the cyan filter. Each red image pixel and corresponding cyan image pixel are processed in block **122** to detect the presence of tail lamps. A method that may be used to detect tail lamps using red and cyan image pixels is described with regards to FIG. **5** below. Once the check for headlamps and, if no headlamps are detected, the check for tail lamps are completed, the illumination range is controlled in block **124**. Various alternatives for controlling illumination range **24** of continuously variable headlamps **22** are described with regards to FIGS. **2** and **3** above and to FIGS. **7** through **13** below.

Alternatives to the method shown in FIG. **4** are possible. For example, the image obtained through the cyan filter in block **110** may be used as the image obtained through the cyan filter in block **116**.

Referring now to FIG. **5**, a flow chart of a method for detecting tail lamps according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. Pixels in image array sensor **52** that image light **50** through the red filter in vehicle imaging lens system **48** are examined.

The location of each pixel within image array sensor **52** is first determined to be within the tail lamp window in block **130**. In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, image array sensor **52** contains more pixels than are necessary to acquire an image through the red and cyan filters having sufficient resolution. These additional pixels can be used to compensate for imperfections in ailing imaging system **42** relative to controlled vehicle **20**. By including additional rows and columns of pixels, rows and columns of pixels on the edge of image array sensor **52** may be disregarded to compensate for aiming variations. Methods for aiming imaging system **42** relative to controlled vehicle **20** will be described with regards to FIGS. **9** through **13** below. If the pixel is not determined to be within the tail lamp window, the flow diagram is exited and the next pixel is selected for examination as in block **132**.

If the pixel selected from the red image is within the tail lamp window, the value of the pixel is compared to the corresponding pixel from the cyan image in block **134**. A decision is made in block **136** based on the comparison. If the red pixel is not N % greater than the cyan pixel, the next red pixel is determined as in block **132**. Several criteria may be used to determine the value of N. N may be fixed. N may also be derived from the ambient light level. N may further be based on the spatial location of the examined pixel. Distant leading vehicle **28** in front of controlled vehicle **20** may be subjected to illumination **24** at full range intensity. Thus, a lower value for N may be used for pixels directly in front of controlled vehicle **20** while a higher value for N may be used for pixels corresponding to areas not directly in front of controlled vehicle **20**.

Once the examined pixel is determined to be sufficiently red, one or more brightness thresholds are determined in

block **138**. The intensity of the red pixel is then compared to the one or more thresholds in block **140**. If the examined red pixel is not sufficiently bright enough, the next pixel to be examined is determined as in block **132**. The one or more thresholds may be based on a variety of factors. A threshold may be based on the average illumination level of surrounding pixels. It may also be based on settings for image array sensor **52** and analog-to-digital converter **64**. The average pixel intensity over the entire image may also be used to set a threshold. As in the case of N, the threshold may also be determined by the pixel spatial location. For example, the threshold for pixels outside of 6° right and left of center should correspond to a light level incident on image array sensor **52** of about 12 times as bright as the threshold of red light directly in front of controlled vehicle **20** and pixels between 3° and 6° lateral angle should have a light level about 4 times as bright as a pixel imaged in front of controlled vehicle **20**. Such spatial varying thresholds help to eliminate false tail lamp detection caused by red reflectors along the side of the road.

Once the examined pixel is determined to be sufficiently red and determined to have a sufficient illumination level, the pixel is added to a tail lamp list in block **142**. Pixels are filtered for reflector recognition in block **144**. The position of each pixel in the tail lamp list is compared to the position of pixels in the tail lamp lists from previous images to determine if the pixels represent tail lamps or roadside reflectors. Several techniques may be used. First, rapid rightward motion of a pixel over several frames is a strong indication that the pixels are imaging a stationary reflector. Also, since the speed at which controlled vehicle **20** overtakes leading vehicle **28** is much less than the speed at which controlled vehicle **20** would overtake a stationary reflector, the rate of increase in brightness of pixels would be typically much greater for a stationary reflector than for tail lamps on leading vehicle **28**. A decision is made in block **46** to determine if the pixel is a reflector image. If not, a determination is made that a tail lamp has been detected in block **148**.

Referring now to FIG. **6**, a flow chart of a method for detecting headlamps according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. A pixel from image array sensor **52** is selected from a region viewing light **50** through vehicle image lens system **48** having a cyan filter. The pixel to be examined is first checked to determine if the pixel is within the headlamp window in block **160**. As in block **130** in FIG. **5** above, block **160** permits corrections in the aiming of imaging system **42** by not using all rows and columns of image array sensor **52**. If the examined pixel is not within the headlamp window, the flow chart is exited and the next pixel is obtained as in block **162**.

A check is made in block **164** to determine if the examined pixel is greater than an upper limit. If so, a determination is made that a headlamp has been detected in block **166** and the flow chart is exited. The upper limit used may be a fixed value, may be based on the ambient light level, and may also be based on the spatial location of the examined pixel.

If the upper limit in intensity is not exceeded, one or more thresholds are calculated in block **168**. A comparison is made in block **170** to determine if the intensity of the examined pixel is greater than at least one threshold. If not, the next pixel to be examined is determined in block **162**. As in block **138** in FIG. **5** above, the one or more thresholds may be determined based on a variety of factors. The ambient light level may be used. Also, the average intensity of pixels surrounding the examined pixel may be used. Further, the vertical and horizontal spatial location of the examined pixel may be used to determine the threshold.

If the examined pixel is greater than at least one threshold, the pixel is added to the headlamp list in block **172**. Each pixel in the headlamp list is filtered for recognition as a street lamp in block **174**. One filtering method that may be used is to examine a sequence of pixels in successive frames corresponding to a potential headlamp. If this light source exhibits alternating current (AC) modulation, the light source is deemed to be a street lamp and not a headlamp. Another method that may be used is the relative position of the light source in question from frame to frame. If the light source exhibits rapid vertical movement, it may be deemed a street lamp. A determination is made in block **176** as whether or not the light source is a street lamp. If the light source is not a street lamp, a decision is made that a headlamp has been detected in block **178**.

Referring to FIG. **7**, a schematic diagram illustrating reducing headlamp illumination range according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. Controlled vehicle **20** has continuously variable headlamp **22** with adjustable elevational aim. Imaging system **42** is mounted in the rearview mirror mounting bracket and aimed to look through the windshield of controlled vehicle **20**. In this position, imaging system **42** is approximately 0.5 meters above the plane of continuously variable headlamps **22**. When oncoming vehicle **26** is detected, an angle is calculated between the direction of vehicle forward motion **190** and the headlamps of oncoming vehicle **26**. This inclination angle **192** is used to aim continuously variable headlamps **22**. The elevational direction of the upper extent of illumination range **24**, indicated by **194**, is set to be approximately parallel with a line from imaging system **42** to the headlamps of oncoming vehicle **26**. This places beam upper extent **194** approximately 0.5 meters below the headlamps of oncoming vehicle **26**, thereby providing aiming tolerance, lighting the road nearly to oncoming vehicle **26**, and avoiding striking the eyes of the driver of oncoming vehicle **26**. If multiple vehicles **26** are detected, beam upper extent **194** is set to be substantially parallel with the greatest of the determined elevational angles **192**.

In an embodiment, the adjustment range of continuously variable headlamps **22** may be restricted, particularly when angle **192** is substantially above or below a normal level. When one or more vehicle pitch sensors **70** are also used, control system **40** may base the aiming of headlamps **22** on output from imaging system **42** when lamps of oncoming vehicles **26** or leading vehicles **28** have been located and leveling control may be used otherwise. In yet another embodiment, input from vehicle pitch sensors **70** may be used to calculate a limit on how high to set beam upper extent **194** to keep the beam elevation within regulated ranges. Inputs from vehicle speed sensor **72** may be used to anticipate acceleration of controlled vehicle **20** to maintain the proper inclination for beam upper extent **194**.

Referring now to FIG. **8**, a flow diagram of an alternative method for reducing headlamp illumination range according to the present invention is shown. An image is acquired in block **200** and a determination is made to see if any vehicle is within the glare area in block **202**. Techniques for determining the presence of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28** have been described with regards to FIGS. **4** through **6** above. If no vehicle is detected,,the illumination range is set to full range in block **204**.

If a vehicle is detected within the glare area, the illumination range is decreased incrementally in block **206**. This

results in illumination range **24** being decreased at a predetermined rate over a predetermined transition time. Several techniques are available for decreasing illumination range **24**. First, the intensity of light emitted by continuously variable headlamp **22** may be decreased. Second, headlamps **22** may be aimed downward. Third, headlamps **22** may be aimed horizontally away from the direction of oncoming vehicle **26**. In a refinement of the last option, a check is made to determine if any leading vehicles **28** are in curb lanes on the opposite side of controlled vehicle **20** from oncoming vehicle **26**. If any leading vehicles **28** are detected, continuously variable headlamps **22** are not aimed toward the curb lane. The rate at which illumination range **24** is decreased may be constant or may be a finction of parameters including the current inclination angle of continuously variable headlamps **22**, the estimated range of oncoming vehicle **26** or leading vehicle **28**, ambient light levels, and the like.

Depending on the automatic headlamp dimming technique used, precise measurements of camera-to-vehicle and headlamp-to-camera angles may be required. Concerning the latter, the difference between the direction that control system **40** commands the beam of continuously variable headlamp **22** versus the actual direction of the beam of headlamp **22** relative to imaging system **42** is a critical system parameter. For example, low beams are designed to provide a very sharp transition from a relatively strong beam with beam upper extent **194** projected about 1.5° downward to a greatly diminished intensity which is normally viewed by drivers of vehicles **26**,**28** in the path of the beams. Thus, errors of 0.5°, particularly in the elevational direction, are significant. Errors of 2° are likely to subject drivers of vehicles **26**,**28** to intolerable glare from direct, prolonged exposure to brighter portions of illumination range **24** as if headlamp **22** had not been dimmed at all. The position of illumination range **24** relative to imaging system **42** may be determined using control system **40**.

In one embodiment, the position of illumination range **24** is sensed directly relative to the lights of oncoming vehicles **26** and leading vehicles **28** as adjustments to illumination range **24** are being made. In an alternative embodiment, illumination range **24** is momentarily delayed from returning to full range. A sequence of images is taken containing beam upper extent **194**. If controlled vehicle **20** is in motion and the beam pattern stays the same in each of the sequence of images, control vehicle **20** can be assumed to be moving on a straight and level road. Beam upper extent **194** can then be determined relative to imaging system **42** by looking for a sharp transition between very bright and very dim regions in the output of image array sensor **52**. The intensity of illumination range **24** may also be varied during the sequence of images to ensure that the bright-to-dim transition is actually caused by continuously variable headlamp **22**. Experimentation is required to determine a reasonable minimum speed, length of time, and number of frames to obtain satisfactorily consistent measurements for a particular implementation.

A method for aiming imaging system **42** relative to controlled vehicle **20** is to precisely position controlled vehicle **20** in front of a target that can be seen by imaging system **42**. This method is ideally suited to the automobile manufacturing process where aiming imaging system **42** may be incorporated with or replace current headlamp aiming. Vehicle dealerships and repair shops may be equipped with similar targetting apparatus.

Referring now to FIGS. **9** through **13**, a method for establishing the aim of imaging system **42** relative to controlled vehicle **20** that may be performed during the normal operation of controlled vehicle **20** is described. This method may be used in conjunction with the targeting method described above.

Referring now to FIG. **9**, an illustration of street lamp imaging is shown. Image **220** represents an output from imaging system **42** showing how street lamp **222** might appear in a sequence of frames. By noting changes in the relative position of street lamp **222** in image **220**, the vertical and horizontal aim of imaging system **42** relative to controlled vehicle **20** forward motion can be determined. For simplicity, the following discussion concentrates on determining vertical angle. This discussion can be extended to determining horizontal angle as well.

Referring now to FIGS. **10***a* and **10***b*, schematic diagrams of apparent street light elevational angle as a function of camera-to-vehicle inclination angle are shown. In FIG. **10***a*, imaging system axis **230** is aligned with vehicle forward motion direction **190**. Imaging system axis **230** can be thought of as a normal to the plane of image array sensor **52**. Over a sequence of images, street lamp **222** appears to be approaching imaging system **42**. The angle between street lamp **222** and imaging system axis **230**, shown by **232**, increases linearly.

In FIG. **10***b*, imaging system **42** is not aimed in the direction of vehicle forward motion **190**. In particular, vehicle forward motion direction **190** and imaging system axis **230** form inclination angle **234**. Therefore, in a sequence of images, street lamp elevational angle **232** appears to increase in a non-linear fashion.

Referring now to FIG. **11**, a schematic diagram illustrating street lamp elevational angle calculation according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. Image array sensor **52** in imaging system **42** is represented as an array of pixels, one of which is shown by **240**. The number of pixels **240** shown in FIG. **11** is greatly reduced for clarity. Vehicle imaging lens system **48** is represented by single lens **242**. Street lamp **222** is imaged by lens **242** onto image array sensor **52** as street lamp image **244**. Street lamp elevational angle **232**, shown as θ, can be calculated by equation 1:

$$\tan(\theta) = \left(\frac{(IRN - RRN)\cdot PH}{FL}\right) \qquad \text{(EQ. 1)}$$

where RRN (Reference Row Number) is the row number corresponding to imaging system axis **230**, IRN (Image Row Number) is the row number of street lamp image **244**, PH is the row height of each pixel **240**, and FL is the focal length of lens **242** relative to image array sensor **52**.

Referring now to FIG. **12**, a graph illustrating street lamp elevational angles for three different camera-to-vehicle inclination angles is shown. Curves **250**, **252**, **254** show the cotangent of the inclination angle as a function of simulated distance for street lamp **222** that is five meters high. Images are taken at 20 meter intervals from 200 to 80 meters as controlled vehicle **20** approaches street lamp **222**. For curve **250**, imaging system axis **230** is aligned with vehicle forward motion direction **190**. For curve **252**, imaging system axis **230** is one-half degree above vehicle forward motion direction **190**. For curve **254**, imaging system axis **230** is one-half degree below vehicle forward motion direction **190**. Curve **250** forms a straight line whereas curve **252** is concave upward and curve **254** is concave downward.

Referring now to FIG. **13**, a flow diagram of a method for calculating camera-to-vehicle inclination angle according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. A count of the number of images taken is reset in block **260**. The

image count is compared to the maximum count (max count) required in block **262**. The number of images required should be determined experimentally based on the type of imaging system **42** used and the configuration of imaging system **42** in controlled vehicle **22**. If the image count is less than the maximum count, the next image is acquired and the image count is incremented in block **264**.

A light source is found in the image in block **266**. If this is the first image in a sequence or if no suitable light source has been previously found, a number of light sources may be marked for potential consideration. If a light source has been found in a previous image in the sequence, an attempt is made to find the new position of that light source. This attempt may be based on searching pixels in the last known location of the light source and, if a sequence of positions is known, may be based on extrapolating from the sequence of light source images to predict the next location of the light source.

A check is made to determine if the light source is stationary in block **268**. One check is to determine if the light source exhibits AC modulation by examining light source intensity over successive images. Another check is to track the relative position of the light source in the sequence of images. If the light source is not stationary, the image count is reset in block **270**. If the light source is stationary, an elevational measure is calculated in block **272**. A technique for calculating elevational angle was described with regards to FIG. **11** above.

When each image in a sequence of max count images contains a stationary light source, elevational measurements are validated in block **274**. As indicated with regards to FIG. **12** above, a sequence of elevational measurements for a stationary light source, when expressed as the cotangent of the angle as a function of distance, forms either a straight line, a concave upward curve, or a concave downward curve. The sequence of elevational measurements is examined to ensure that the sequence fits one of these patterns. If not, the sequence is discarded and a new sequence is obtained.

In an embodiment of the present invention, a check is made to determine if the sequence of images was acquired during relatively steady travel at relatively constant speed. If not, the sequence is discarded and a new sequence is obtained. Constant speed can be checked using the output of speed sensor **72**. Steady travel may be checked by examining the relative positions of stationary and non-stationary light sources over a sequence of frames.

The image elevation relative to the vehicle is determined in block **276**. If the sequence of elevational measurements does not form a straight line, inclination angle **234** may be estimated by adding a constant value representing the radiant value correction to each of the tangent values to arrive at a corrected tangent value. The reciprocal of the new values are taken and analyzed to determine the difference between successive values. If the difference is zero, the correction value is the tangent of inclination angle **234**. If the sequence of differences is not zero, the concavity of the new sequence is determined. If the concavity direction of the new sequence is the same as the original sequence, the correction value is increased. If the concavity directions are opposite, the correction factor is decreased. A new sequence of differences is then obtained and the process is repeated.

Referring now to FIG. **14**, a cross-sectional drawing of an imaging system that may be used to implement the present invention is shown. A similar imaging system is more completely described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,130,421 entitled "Imaging System for Vehicle Headlamp Control" by J. Bechtel, J. Stam, and J. Roberts, which is hereby incorporated by reference. Imaging system **42** includes housing **280** which holds vehicle imaging lens system **48** and image array sensor **52**. Housing **280** defines aperture **282** which opens onto a scene generally in front of controlled vehicle **20**. Support **284** serves to hold red lens **286** and cyan lens **288** and serves to prevent light coming through aperture **282** and not passing through a lens **286**, **288** from striking image array sensors **52**. As is further described with regards to FIG. **15** below, image array sensor **52** has a first region for receiving light transmitted by red lens **286** and a second, non-overlapping region for receiving light transmitted by cyan lens **288**. Aperture **282**, the spacing between lenses **286**, **288**, and baffle **290** are designed to minimize the amount of light passing through one of lens **286**, **288** and striking the portion of image sensor **52** used to image light from the other of lens **286**, **288**.

An embodiment of lenses **286**, **288** will now be described. Lenses **286**, **288** may be manufactured on a single plate of polymer, such as acrylic, shown as **292**. The polymer may optionally include infrared filtration, ultraviolet filtration, or both. Each lens **286**, **288** is plano-convex with the forward facing surface convex and aspheric. The front surface of each lens **286**, **288** may be scribed by equation 2:

$$Z = \frac{cr^2}{1 + \sqrt{1 - (1 + k)c^2 r^2}} \qquad \text{(EQ. 2)}$$

where Z is the value of the height of the lens surface along the optical surface as a function of the radial distance r from the optical axis, c is the curvature, and k is the conic constant. For the front surface of red lens **286**, c equals 0.456 mm^{-1} and k equals −1.0. For the front surface of cyan lens **288**, c equals 0.446 mm^{-1} and k equals −1.0. Lenses **286**, **288** have a diameter of 1.1 mm and have centers spaced 1.2 mm apart. At the center, each lens **286**, **288** is 1.0 mm. Plate **292** is mounted to baffle **284** such that the back of each lens **286**, **288** is 4.0 mm in front of image array sensor **52**. This distance is indicated by focal length FL in FIG. **14**. Red and cyan filters are printed onto the rear flat surfaces of red lens **286** and cyan **288** respectively using screen, pad, or other printing techniques. The red filter substantially transmits light of wavelengths longer than 625 nm while attenuating light of wavelength shorter than 625 nm. The cyan filter substantially transmits light of wavelength shorter than 625 nm while attenuating light of wavelength longer than 625 nm. The preferable field of view afforded by lenses **286** and **288** is 10° high by 20° wide.

Referring now to FIG. **15**, a schematic diagram of image array sensor subwindows that may be used to implement the present invention are shown. Image array sensor **52** includes an array of pixel sensors, one of which is indicated by **240**, arranged in rows and columns. Image array sensor **52** includes top border **302**, bottom border **304**, left border **306**, and right border **308** defining a region covered by pixel sensors **240**. Image array sensor **52** is divided into several subwindows. Upper subwindow **310** is bounded by borders **308**, **312**, **314**, and **316**, and contains pixel sensors **240** struckby an image projected through red lens **286**. Lower subwindow **318** is bounded by borders **308**, **320**, **314**, and **322**, and includes pixel sensors **240** onto which an image is projected through cyan lens **288**.

Lenses **286**, **288** provide a field of view in front of controlled vehicle **20** such as, for example, 22° wide by 9° high. A space between border **312** and top edge **302** and between borders **316** and **324** allow for an elevational adjustment to correct for misalignment of imaging system

42 in controlled vehicle 20. To accomplish the adjustment, upper subwindow 310, defined by borders 312 and 316, are moved up or down within the range between top edge 302 and border 324. Similarly, borders 320 and 322 represent boundaries for lower subwindow 318 that may be moved between bottom edge 304 and border 326. Pixel sensors 240 that lie within the region between borders 324 and 326 may receive light from both red lens 286 and cyan lens 288. Therefore, this region is not normally used as part of the active imaging area. Although only elevational adjustment has been described, lateral adjustment is also possible.

Pixel sensors 240 lying between left edge 306 and border 314 may be used for ambient light sensing. Ambient light sensing is described with regards to FIG. 20 below.

In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, image array sensor 52 includes a 256×256 array of square pixel sensors 240. In an alternative embodiment, pixel sensor 52 includes a 256×128 square array of rectangular pixels, resulting in a vertical resolution greater than the horizontal resolution.

Referring now to FIG. 16, aschematic diagram of an embodiment of an image array sensor that may be used to implement the present invention is shown. Pixel sensor 240 and the technique for correlated double sampling shown are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,471,515 entitled "Active Pixel Sensor With Intra-Pixel Charge Transfer" to E. Fossum, S. Mendis, and S. Kemeny, which is hereby incorporated by reference. The circuitry described can be built using standard CMOS processes. Devices similar to image array sensor 52 are available from Photobit Corporation of Pasedena, Calif.

Image sensor array 52 includes an array of pixels 240. Light striding photogate transistor 330 in each pixel 240 generates electrical charge which is accumulated beneath photogate transistor 330. During charge collection, the gate of photogate transistor 330 is held at a positive voltage to create a well beneath photogate transistor 330 to hold the accumulated charge. The gate of gate electrode 332 is held at a less positive voltage, V_{TX}, to form a barrier to the flow of electrons accumulated beneath photogate transistor 330. In an embodiment, V_{TX} is 3.8 volts relative to VSS. When charge readout is desired, the gate of photogate transistor 330 is brought to a voltage less than V_{TX}. The accumulated charge then flows from photogate transistor 330 through gate electrode 332 to the region beneath floating diffusion 334. Floating diffusion 334 is connected to the gate of n-channel FET 336 which has its drain connected to supply voltage VDD. Typically, VDD is 5.0 volts referenced to VSS. The gate of photogate transistor 330 is returned to its original voltage. A potential proportional to the accumulated charge can now be sensed at the source of FET 336.

During charge transfer and readout, the gate of reset electrode 338 is held at a low positive voltage to form a barrier to electrodes beneath floating diffusion 334. When the gate of reset electrode 338 is brought to a high positive voltage, charge collected beneath floating diffusion 334 is transferred through the region beneath reset electrode 338 and into drain diffusion 340 which is connected to VDD. This brings the source of FET 336 to an initial or reset potential. By subtracting this reset potential from the illumination potential proportional to accumulated charge, a great degree of fixed pattern noise may be eliminated. This technique is known as correlated double sampling.

Pixel sensors 240 are arranged in row and columns. In a preferred embodiment, all of the pixels in a row of a selected subwindow are read simultaneously into readout circuits, one of which is indicated by 342. One readout circuit 342 exists for each column. The row to be read is selected by a row address, indicated generally as 344. Row address 344 is fed into row decoder 346 causing the row select line 348 corresponding to row address 344 to become asserted. When row select line 348 is asserted, n-channel FET 350 is turned on, allowing the potential at the source of FET 336 to appear on column readout line 352. All pixels 240 in each column are connected to a common column readout line 352. However, since each pixel in the column has a unique row address, only one row select line 348 can be asserted resulting in at most one FET 336 source potential appearing on column readout line 352.

Two control signals provide the timing for gating charge in each pixel 240. Photogate signal (PG) 354 is a high asserting signal indicating when charge is to be transferred from photogate transistor 330 to floating diffusion 334. Each row has gate 356 which ANDs photogate signal 354 and row select line 348 to produce row photogate signal 358 which is connected to the gate of each photogate transistor 330 in the row. Row reset signal (RR) 360 is a high asserting signal indicating when floating diffusions 334 should be returned to the reset potential. Each row has gate 362 which ANDs row reset signal 360 with the appropriate row select line 348 to produce reset signal 364 which is connected to the gate of each reset electrode 338 in the row.

Voltages at the source of FET 336 are dropped across load FET 366 when FET 350 is on. Load FET 366 is an n-channel device with a fixed gate voltage of V_{LN}. In this embodiment, V_{LN} is approximately 1.5 volts referenced to VSS. Each pixel 240 may contain load FET 366 or, as is shown in FIG. 16, one load FET 366 may be used for each column.

Readout circuit 342 provides sample-and-hold for potentials on column readout line 352 as well as output buffering. Two input signals control each readout circuit 342. Sample-and-hold reset signal (SHR) 368 turns on n-channel FET 370 allowing the potential on column readout line 352 to charge capacitor 372. Capacitor 372 is used to store the reset potential. Sample-and-hold illumination signal (SHS) 374 turns on n-channel FET 376. Tis permits the potential on column readout line 352 to charge capacitor 378. Capacitor 378 is used to hold the illumination potential proportional to the charge accumulated by photogate transistor 330.

At the end of a complete readout operation, the reset potential and illumination potential from each pixel 240 in a selected row are stored in capacitors 372, 378 in each readout circuit 342. A column address, shown generally by 380, is input into decoder 382 asserting corresponding column select line 384. Each column select line 384 controls an associated readout circuit 342 to determine which readout circuit 342 will be driving common output lines SIGOUT 386 holding the illumination potential and RSTOUT 388 holding the reset potential. Buffer 390, with input connected across capacitor 378 and output connected to SIGOUT 386, and buffer 392, with input connected across capacitor 372 and output connected to RSTOUT 388 in each readout circuit 342 are enabled by the appropriate column select line 384.

Referring now to FIGS. 17*a* through 17*e,* a schematic diagram of an embodiment of the present invention is shown. Much of the circuitry shown in FIGS. 17*a* and 17*b* is described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,990,469 entitled "Control Circuit For Image Array Sensors" to J. Bechtel and J. Stam, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

In FIG. 17*a*, image array sensor 52 is shown as integrated circuit chip U7. Biasing circuitry 400 is used to set the various voltage levels, such as V_{TX} and V_{LN}, required by image array sensor 52. Output SIGOUT 386 and RSTOUT

388 are the illumination potential and reset potential respectively for pixel 240 selected by row address 344 and column address 380. Difference amplifier 402, such as the AD 830 High Speed, Video Difference Amplifier by Analog Devices, accepts SIGOUT 386 and RSTOUT 388 and produces noise reduced signal 404. Analog-to-digital converter 406, such as LTC 1196 by Linear Technology, accepts noise reduced signal 404 and produces digitized signal (ADDATA) 408. The analog-to-digital conversion is started by asserting conversion signal (CONVST) 410. The converted value is serially shifted out at a rate determined by the input ADC clock signal (ADCLK) 412.

The integrated circuit designated U4 and associated components regulate the approximately 12 volt car battery output to a 5 volt VCC supply voltage. The integrated circuit U3 and associated components produces a conditioned 5 volt supply signal.

In FIG. 17*b*, application specific integrated circuit (ASIC) 414 is shown. ASIC 414 contains much of the logic for controlling image array sensor 52 and analog-to-digital converter 406 as well as for communicating with processor 66. In the embodiment shown, ASIC 414 is an XC4003E from Xylinx. However, it is well known in the art that a wide range of means are available for implementing the logic in ASIC 414 including discrete logic, custom VLSI integrated circuits, various FPGAs, programmable signal processors, and microcontrollers. The logic implemented by ASIC 414 is described with regards to FIG. 18 below. Serial memory 416, such as the AT17C65 by Atmel, is configured to store and automatically download the code describing the designed logical operation into ASIC 414 each time power is first applied. Clock signal 418, labeled OSC, is generated by processor 66 and drives the sequential logic in ASIC 414.

ASIC 414 communicates with processor 66 using three lines. Data is shifted serially between ASIC 414 and processor 66 on master out slave in (MOSI) 420 at a rate determined by serial peripheral serial clock (SPSCLK) 422 in a direction determined by slave select (SSI) 424. When SSI 424 is asserted, processor 66 is the master and ASIC 414 is the slave. Processor 66 shifts instruction words into ASIC 414. In this mode, processor 66 drives SPSCLK 422. During instruction execution, processor 66 deasserts SSI 424 making ASIC 414 the master and processor 66 the slave. ASIC 414 shifts digitized, noise reduced intensity signals to processor 66. In this mode, ASIC 414 generates SPSCLK 422.

As technology improves, it is desirable to locate image array sensor 52, difference amplifier 402, ADC 406, and the logic implemented in ASIC 414 on a single integrated circuit chip. It may be possible to include processor 66 on such a chip as well.

In FIG. 17*c*, processor 66 and associated electronics are shown. Processor 66 may be an H8S2128 microcontroller from Hitachi. Processor 66 generates instructions for ASIC 414 that determine, in part, which subwindows of image array sensor 52 will be examined. Processor 66 receives digitized intensities from each pixel 240 in designated subwindows of image array sensor 62. Processor 66 uses these intensities to carry out the methods described with regards to FIGS. 3 through 13 above for controlling continuously variable headlamps 22. One necessary function is control of the gain for images acquired using image array sensor 52. As described with regards to FIG. 4 above, the gain for an image used to detect the tail lamps of leading vehicles 28 needs to be greater than the gain for an image used to detect headlamps of oncoming vehicles 26. One or more of several means are possible for controlling image array sensor 52 gain. First, the integration time of pixels 240 can be varied. Second, the reference voltage, VREF, of ADC 406 can be changed. Third, difference amplifier 402 can have a variable, controllable gain. Fourth, a variable aperture or a variable attenuator, such as an electrochromic window, can be placed in the path of light striking image array sensor 52.

The types and numbers of control signals required for headlamps 22 depend on headlamp configuration in controlled vehicle 20. For the embodiment described below, controlled vehicle 20 has two continuously variable high beam headlamps 22 and two continuously variable low beam headlamps 22. Each high beam headlamp 22 can be vertically and horizontally aimed using stepper motors. The intensity of both high beam headlamps 22 is controlled by a single pulse width modulated signal. The two low beam headlamps 22 are not steerable but have intensities controlled by a single pulse width modulated signal. It is apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art that the present invention can control various configurations of continuously variable headlamps 22.

Processor 66 includes a first set of control signals, shown generally by 426, for controlling the aim of the left high beam headlamp. A similar set of eight control signals, shown generally by 428, are used to control the aim of the right high beam headlamp. Labels have been left off right aim control signals 428 for clarity. A description of aim control signals 426,428 is provided with regard to FIG. 17*e* below. Processor. 66 also generates high beam modulated signal 430 which is buffered to become high beam pulse width modulated signal (PWM) 432. Identical circuitry may be connected to low beam modulated signal 434. This circuitry has been omitted for clarity. Headlamp controller 76 using PWM signal 432 is described with regards to FIG. 17*d* below.

In FIG. 17*d*, headlamp system 46 includes incandescent headlamp 22 and headlamp intensity controller 76. Headlamp intensity controller 76 includes a power FET, such as the IRFZ44N by International Rectifier. The intensity of light emitted by headlamp 22 is proportional to the duty cycle of PWM signal 432. A base frequency for PWM signal 432 of 2,000 Hz is preferred. Higher frequencies may increase the power dissipation of the power FET.

In FIG. 17*e*, headlamp system 46 includes headlamp 22 with variable vertical and horizontal aiming and headlamp controller 76 for providing aiming signals. Headlamp 22 includes vertical stepper motor 440 for controlling vertical aim direction and horizontal stepper motor 442 for controlling horizontal aim direction. Headlamp 22 also includes vertical home switch 444 and horizontal home switch 446 for indicating when headlamp 22 is in the home position. Vertical home switch 444 produces vertical home signal (VSW) 448. Horizontal home switch 446 produces horizontal home signal (HSW) 450. Vertical motor 440 is driven by motor controller 452, such as the SAA1042 by Motorola. Motor controller 452 has three inputs. Vertical direction (VDIR) 454 indicates the direction of rotation of motor 440 for each positive edge on vertical clock (VCLK) 456. Vertical step (VSTEP) indicates whether motor 440 will make a full step or a half step for each applied pulse of vertical clock 456. Horizontal motor controller 460 has horizontal direction (HDIR) 462, horizontal clock (HCLK) 464, and horizontal step (HSTEP) 466 which function similar to vertical direction 454, vertical clock 456, and vertical step 458 for vertical motor controller 452.

In an alternative embodiment using HID headlamps, the direction of light emitted from one or more headlamps 22 is changed using magnetodynamic positioning (MDP). HID headlamps operate by producing a charged arc in a gas such

as xenon. The arc may be perturbed by the presence of a magnetic field. Reflectors may be designed such that various perturbations of the arc produce changes in the direction, intensity, or both of light emitted by HID headlamp **22**. Aim control signals **426,428** from processor **66** may be replaced by analog or digital outputs determining the direction for aiming the output of HID headlamp **22**. Headlamps utilizing magnetodynamic positioning are being developed by Osram Sylvania Inc. of Danvers, Massachusetts.

Referring now to FIG. **18**, a block diagram illustrating registers and associated logic used to control the image control sensor is shown. The logic described below is more completely discussed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,990,469 entitled "Control Circuit For Image Array Sensors" to J. Bechtel, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

ASIC **414** includes control logic **480** which controls a collection of registers and associated logic. All but two of the registers are initially loaded with data from an instruction serially shifted over MOSI **420** from processor **66**. The path used to initialize the registers, indicated by **482**, is shown as a dashed line in FIG. **18**. The purpose for each of the registers and associated logic will now be described.

ASIC **414** can specify two subwindows within image array sensor **52**. The first subwindow is specified by low and high column addresses and low and high row addresses. The second subwindow is specified as having a column offset and a row offset from the first subwindow. Hence, the first and second subwindows have the same size. These two subwindows may be upper subwindow **310** and lower subwindow **318** described with regard to FIG. **15** above. As described with regards to FIG. **16** above, readout and reset of each pixel **240** occurs by rows. Alternate rows from each subwindow are obtained. Each pixel in the selected row of first subwindow is read and then each pixel in the selected row of the second subwindow is read.

Five registers are used to specify column address **380**. Second subwindow column offset register (SCO) **484** holds the column offset between the first subwindow and the second subwindow. Low column register (LC) **486** holds the starting column value for the first subwindow. High column register (HC) **488** holds the ending column value of the first subwindow. Active column register (AC) **490** holds the value of the currently examined column in the first subwindow. Column select register (CS) **492** holds column address **380**. Multiplexer **494** is initially set so that register AC **490** is loaded with the same column starting value as register LC **486** when processor **66** shifts an instruction into ASIC **414**. During instruction execution, multiplexer **496** is initially set so that register CS **492** is loaded with the value of register AC **490**. Register AC **490** is incremented to select each column in the first subwindow until the contents of register AC **490** is greater, than the final column value in register HC **488** as determined by comparator **498**. Register AC **490** is then reloaded with the starting column value from register LC **486** through multiplexer **494**. Multiplexer **496** is then set so that register CS **492** is loaded with the sum of register AC **490** and register SCO **484** produced by adder **499**. As register AC **490** is incremented, register CS **492** then holds successive column addresses **380** of the second subwindow.

Row address **344** is specified using six registers. Second subwindow row offset register (SRO) **500** holds the row offset between the first subwindow and the second subwindow. Low row register (LR) **502** holds the starting row address of the first subwindow. High row register (HR) **504** holds the ending row address of the first subwindow. Reset row register (RR) **506** holds the address of the first subwindow row for reset. ADC row register (AR) **508** holds the first subwindow row to be read out for analog-to-digital conversion. Row select register (RS) **510** holds row address **344**. Register RR **506** and register AR **508** are used to determine the integration time for each pixel **240**. If each row in image array sensor **52** is reset immediately prior to readout, a very short integration time results. If each row is reset immediately following readout, a longer integration period results, the length of which depends on the number of rows in the first subwindow. An additional means for farther extending integration time is described below. Four rows must therefore be considered, the reset row of the first subwindow, the reset row of the second subwindow, the conversion row of the first subwindow, and the conversion row of the second subwindow. Multiplexer **512** and multiplexer **514** are first set to pass the contents of register RR **506** into register RS **510**. This makes the reset row of the first subwindow row address **344**. Multiplexers **512,514** are then set so that register RS **510** is loaded with the sum of register RR **506** and register SRO **500** produced by adder **516**. This makes row address **344** the reset row of the second subwindow. Multiplexers **512,514** are then set to load register RS **510** with the contents of register AR **508**. This makes row address **344** the conversion row of the first subwindow. Multiplexers **512,514** are then set so that register RS **510** is loaded with the sum of register AR **508** and register SRO **500** produced by adder **516**. This makes row address **344** the conversion row of the second subwindow. Register RR **506** and register AR **508** are then incremented. When the contents of register RR **506** are greater than the ending row value held in register HR **504** as determined by comparator **518**, register RR **506** is reloaded with the starting row address of the first subwindow from register LR **502** through multiplexer **520**. When the value held in register AR **508** is greater than the ending row address in register HR **504** as determined by comparator **522**, register AR **508** is loaded with the starting address of the first-subwindow from register LR **502**.

Two registers allow an integration period greater than the frame period, which is defined as the time required to convert each row in the first subwindow. Integration frame delay register (IFD) **524** holds the two's complement of the number of frame periods for each integration period. Integration frame counter register (IFC) **526** is initially loaded through multiplexer **528** with the value loaded into register IFD **524** plus one provided by serial incrementer **530**. Incrementer **530** has an output indicating overflow. If register IFD **524** is initialized with negative one, incrementer **530** indicates an overflow. This overflow signals control logic **480** to perform row readouts during the next frame period. If an overflow does not occur from incrementer **530**, no row readout is performed during the next frame period. At the end of each frame period, the contents of register IFC **526** are passed through incrementer **530** by multiplexer **528** and incrementer **530** overflow is checked again. When overflow occurs, multiplexer **528** gates the contents of register IFD **524** through incrementer **530** into register IFC **526** and the process is repeated.

Reset frame count register (RFC) **532** is initialized with the two's complement of the number of frames to be read plus one. This value is used to indicate the number of times in which an instruction shifted in from processor **66** is to be repeated. At the end of each frame in which all rows of the first and second subwindows have been read, the overflow output of incrementer **534** is examined. If an overflow has occurred, the instruction is completed and no further processing occurs. If no overflow has occurred, the contents of register RFC **532** are passed through multiplexer **536** and incremented by incrementer **534**.

Outputs from comparators **498**, **518**, **522** and incrementers **530**, **534** are used by control logic **480** to generate internal control signals for multiplexers **494**, **496**, **520**, **512**, **514**, **528**, **536** and incrementers for registers **490**, **506**, **508** as well as for external control signals such as PG **354**, RR **360**, SHS **374**, SHR **368**, CONVST **410**, and ADCLK **412**.

Referring now to FIG. **19**, a timing diagram illustrating image array sensor control signals is shown. The timing diagram is provided to show timing relationships between signals and not necessarily precise times between signal events.

The beginning of the timing diagram in FIG. **19** corresponds with the start of an instruction execution by ASIC **414**. Row address (ROW) **344** is first set to the starting row of the first subwindow, as shown by **550**. Signals RR **360** and PG **354** are then asserted dumping any charge that may be beneath photogate **330** in each pixel **240** in row **550**, as shown generally by **552**. Row address **344** is then set to the first row of the second subwindow, as shown by **554**. Again, signals RR **360** and PG **354** are asserted, as shown by **556**, to reset all pixels **240** in second subwindow first row **554**. Row address **344** is then set to the first subwindow second row, as shown by **558**, and signals RR **360** and PG **354** are asserted as shown by **560**. This process continues by alternately resetting the next row from the first subwindow then the corresponding row from the second subwindow.

At some point in the furture, the time arrives to read the values from each pixel **240** in the first row of the first subwindow. Row address **344** is again set to first subwindow first row address **550**. Signal RR **360** is asserted, as shown by **562**, to dump any charge under floating diffusion **334**. Next, signal SHR **564** is asserted to gate the reset potential for each pixel **240** in first subwindow first row **550** into capacitor **372** of corresponding column readout circuit **342**. Next, signal PG **354** is asserted, as shown by **566**, to transfer charge accumulated under photogates **330** to floating diffusions **334**. Signal SHS **374** is then asserted, as shown by **568**, to gate the illumination potential for each pixel **240** into capacitor **378** of corresponding column readout circuit **342**. Integration period **569** is the time between deasserting signal PG **354** during reset **569** and asserting signal PG **354** during readout **566**.

The conversion process for each column in first subwindow first row **550** can now begin. Column address (COL) **380** is set to first window first column, as shown by **570**. Signal CONVST **410** is then asserted at **572**. This causes ADC **406** to begin conversion. ASIC **414** provides a sequence of clock pulses on ADCLK **412** and receives the digitized illumination value serially on ADDATA **408**. ASIC **414** immediately shifts the data to processor **66** over MOSI **420** as shown by **574**. In the example shown in FIG. **19**, each subwindow contains only four columns. The addresses for first subwindow second column **576**, third column **578**, and fourth column **580** are successively used as column address **380** and the conversion process is repeated.

Row address **344** can then be set to second subwindow first row **554** and the sequence of assertions for signals RR **360**, SHR **368**, PG **354**, and SHS **374** repeated to load column readout circuits **342** with reset and illumination potentials. Column address **380** can be set to second subwindow first column **382** and the conversion sequence can be repeated.

Note that, since the conversion process uses reset and illumination potentials stored in readout circuits **342** and column address **380** but not row address **344** and that row reset requires row address **344** but not column address **380** or readout circuits **342**, row reset may be interleaved with the conversion process. This is seen in FIG. **19** where, following assertion of SHS signal **374** at **568**, row address **344** is set to the first subwindow n^{th} row address **584** and signals RR **360** and PG **354** ate asserted at **586** to reset all pixels **240** in first subwindow n^{th} row **584**.

Referring now to FIG. **20**, an ambient light sensor that may be used to implement the present invention is shown. The ambient light sensor may be incorporated into imaging system **42**. The ambient light sensor is described more fully in U.S. Pat. No. 6,130,421 entitled "Imaging System For Vehicle Headlamp Control" to J. Bechtel, J. Stam, and J. Roberts, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Ambient light lens system **54** includes baffle **600** built onto the front of housing **280**. Baffle **600** is angled at an angle θ e of approximately 45° with the horizontal of controlled vehicle **20**. Baffle **600** defines aperture **602** opening towards the front of controlled vehicle **20**. Aperture **602** may be trapezoidal such that the projection of aperture **602** onto a vertical surface would form a rectangle on the vertical surface. Lens **604** is mounted in one side of aperture **602**. The width of lens **604** is approximately the same as the diameter of red lens **286** or cyan lens **288**. Lens **604** accepts light rays over a wide elevational range, such as vertical ray **606** and horizontal ray **608**, and directs these rays into an approximately horizontal direction. Lens **604** is positioned so that a blurred, inverted image of lens **604** is projected by red lens **286** onto one edge of image array sensor **52** between top border **302** and border **316** to form red sky image **610**. Lens **604** is also positioned so that a blurred, inverted image of lens **604** is projected by cyan lens **288** between bottom border **304** and border **320** to form cyan sky image **612**. The active length of lens **604** is made short enough to permit the entire active length to be projected onto red sky image **610** and cyan sky image **612**.

Red sky image **610** and cyan sky image **612** are examined in processor **66** to determine an ambient light level. The intensity values may be averaged to determine ambient light levels. Lens **604** may be designed so that light **56** from different ranges of elevational angles appears in different regions of lens **604**. In this case, light levels from different ranges of elevational angles may be weighted higher than from other ranges of elevation angles when an average is determined. For example, near vertical light may be weighted highest and near horizontal light may be weighted lowest. Also, since red sky image **610** and cyan sky image **612** are correlated, intensities as a function of color may be obtained. For example, the effective ambient light level may be increased for a blue sky as compared with a cloudy sky.

Referring now to FIG. **21**, a diagram illustrating mounting of a moisture sensor that may be used to implement the present invention is shown. Moisture sensor **74**, as well as imaging system **42**, may be constructed into mounting bracket **620** of interior rearview mirror **622**. Moisture sensor **74** may be mounted two to three inches behind windshield **624** of controlled vehicle **20**.

Referring now to FIG. **22**, a diagram illustrating operation of a moisture sensor that may be used to implement the present invention is shown. Moisture sensor **74** and associated control system are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,923,027 entitled "Moisture Sensor And Windshield Fog Detector" by J. Stam, J. Bechtel, and J. Roberts, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Moisture sensor **74** includes image array sensor **630**, lens **632**, and light source **634**. Lens **632** is designed to focus windshield **624** onto image array sensor **630**. Moisture sensor **74** operates in two modes, one for detecting droplets on windshield **624** and one for detecting fog on windshield