

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated March 24, 2015. Claims 1-21 are pending in the application. Claims 4, 9, 13, and 17 stand withdrawn. Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-12, 14-16, and 18-21 stand rejected. Claims 7 and 16 have been canceled. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested for the reasons presented below.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

Claims 3, 5, 14 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112(b) or 35 U.S.C. 112 (pre-AIA), second paragraph. In response, claims 3, 5, 14, and 18 have been amended to clarify the antecedent basis for the “fluid” as noted by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 15, 16, and 18 stand rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Wailes* (US 3,776,249). Claims 7 and 16 have been canceled.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite “wherein the controller assembly is operable to actuate the fluid drive assembly to supply fluid into the valve actuator to move the gate into the closed position, and wherein the controller assembly is operable to actuate the valve assembly to release the fluid from the valve actuator so that the biasing member moves the gate into the open position and forces the fluid out of the valve actuator.” Claim 12 has been amended to recite “actuating the valve assembly using the controller assembly to release the fluid from the valve actuator so that a biasing member disposed in the valve actuator moves the gate into an open position and forces the fluid out of the valve actuator based upon a comparison of the monitored physical property to a predetermined condition.” *Wailes* fails to disclose these elements of claims 1 and 12.

Wailes discloses a control apparatus having a hydraulic system 17 that directs fluid through separate fluid lines 18, 19 into a power operator 16 (such as a double-acting piston and cylinder assembly) to open and close a valve. See Col. 3, lines 1-8.

Since the valve is opened and closed by fluid supplied into the power operator 16 via separate fluid lines 18, 19, *Wailles* does not disclose a controller assembly operable to actuate a valve assembly to release fluid from a valve actuator so that a biasing member disposed in the valve actuator moves a gate of a safety valve into an open position and forces the fluid out of the valve actuator, as recited in claims 1 and 12. *Wailles* thus fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of claims 1 and 12, and claims dependent therefrom. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-12, 14-16, and 18-21 stand rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Vinegar* (US 2003/0051881) in view of *Cotham* (US 5,335,730). Claims 7 and 16 have been canceled.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite “wherein the controller assembly is operable to actuate the fluid drive assembly to supply fluid into the valve actuator to move the gate into the closed position, and wherein the controller assembly is operable to actuate the valve assembly to release the fluid from the valve actuator so that the biasing member moves the gate into the open position and forces the fluid out of the valve actuator.” Claim 12 has been amended to recite “actuating the valve assembly using the controller assembly to release the fluid from the valve actuator so that a biasing member disposed in the valve actuator moves the gate into an open position and forces the fluid out of the valve actuator based upon a comparison of the monitored physical property to a predetermined condition.” Claim 21 has been amended to recite “actuating the sensor using fluid pressure in the flow line, thereby releasing the actuator fluid from the valve actuator so that a biasing member disposed in the valve actuator moves the gate into an open position and forces the actuator fluid out of the valve actuator to relieve fluid pressure in the flow line.” *Vinegar* and *Cotham* fail to disclose these elements of claims 1, 12, and 21.

Vinegar discloses a system 70, as shown in Figures 4 and 6, which includes a pilot valve 82 that simultaneously directs fluid into an upper chamber of an actuator 84 while directing fluid out of a lower chamber of the actuator 84 (or vice versa) through

separate fluid lines to open and close a valve 74. Since the valve 74 is opened and closed by fluid supplied into the actuator 84 via separate fluid lines 18, 19, *Vinegar* does not disclose a controller assembly operable to actuate a valve assembly to release fluid from a valve actuator so that a biasing member disposed in the valve actuator moves a gate of a safety valve into an open position and forces the fluid out of the valve actuator, as recited in claims 1, 12, and 21. *Cotham* discloses a wellhead control system but fails to cure the deficiency of *Vinegar*. *Vinegar* in view of *Cotham* thus fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of claims 1, 12, and 21, and claims dependent therefrom. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the final office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

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