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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
18/404,525	01/04/2024	Robert B. Wilcox	118508/US02/ PCTNS/180639P	4785
29270	7590	12/05/2025	EXAMINER	
K&L Gates LLP - Howmet Aerospace Inc. K&L Gates Center 210 Sixth Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2613			SAETHER, FLEMMING	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3675	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/05/2025	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

uspatentmail@klgates.com

Notice of Pre-AIA or AIA Status

The present application, filed on or after March 16, 2013, is being examined under the first inventor to file provisions of the AIA.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 112(b):

(b) CONCLUSION.—The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the inventor or a joint inventor regards as the invention.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 112 (pre-AIA), second paragraph:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-8, 13, 21-30, 32-33 and 35-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(b) or 35 U.S.C. 112 (pre-AIA), second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the inventor or a joint inventor (or for applications subject to pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 112, the applicant), regards as the invention. In claim 1, line 17-18, the limitation “extending to be adjacent” is unclear.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

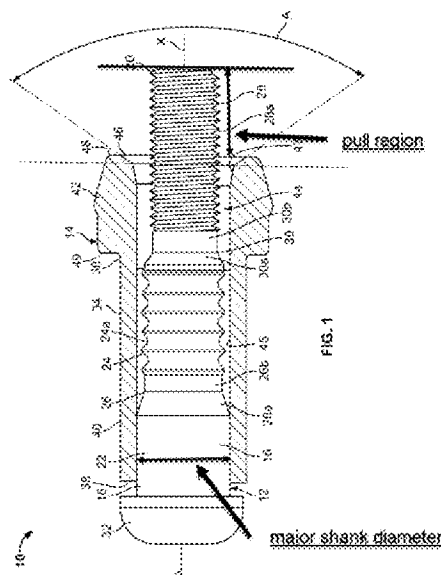
The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a)(1) the claimed invention was patented, described in a printed publication, or in public use, on sale, or otherwise available to the public before the effective filing date of the claimed invention.

(a)(2) the claimed invention was described in a patent issued under section 151, or in an application for patent published or deemed published under section 122(b), in which the patent or application, as the case may be, names another inventor and was effectively filed before the effective filing date of the claimed invention.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21-24, 30, 32-33 and 36-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a)(1) as being anticipated by Corbett (US 10,710,146). Corbett discloses a blind fastener (10) consisting of: a generally cylindrical elongated single piece sleeve (14) having a sleeve diameter including a first end (38), and a second end (48) with a swage collar (42) having a collar diameter and a smooth cavity therethrough with a cavity diameter; and a mandrel (12) received in the cavity including an enlarged portion (32) with a head diameter larger than the cavity diameter at a first mandrel end disposed adjacent the first sleeve end, a pull region (28) at a second end adjacent the second sleeve end, the pull region extending from the second sleeve end to a second mandrel end, a shank region intermediate the first and second ends with at least two grooves (24a); wherein the shank is shown with a major diameter (at 22) and the pull region is clearly shown to have a length less than 2 times the major shank diameter (see Fig. 1). There is no breakneck groove and the fastener is configured to be installed in a bore with a diameter no greater than the head diameter. Corbett discloses the pull region can include a single groove or at least one groove which would inclusive of two grooves (column 3, lines 31-36). The blind fastener is configured to be installed bore in a structure (52, 54) with the sleeve deformed on a first side and the collar swaged on an opposite side (column 5, paragraph beginning line 15) with the pull region remaining intact (column 5, lines 48-50).



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103 which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent for a claimed invention may not be obtained, notwithstanding that the claimed invention is not identically disclosed as set forth in section 102, if the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art are such that the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious before the effective filing date of the claimed invention to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which the claimed invention pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 25, 26 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Corbett as applied to claims 1 and 23 above and further in view of Brewer (US 2016/0215808). Corbett does not disclose the length of the pull region no greater than 1 times the shank diameter. Brewer discloses a fastener (4) including a mandrel (14) with a swage on collar (10) wherein the mandrel has a pull region at one end comprising a single groove (28) wherein the pull region has a length (L) less than 1 times a major shank diameter (D) where the length is disclosed 0.7 to 1.2 times the diameter (p.[0077]). Before the effective filing date of the claimed invention it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to replace the pull region of Corbett with a pull region as disclosed in Brewer because Brewer teaches that pull region as an improvement over a conventional pull regions for the reasons enumerated in paragraphs [0015]-[0017].

Claims 7, 27-29, 34 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Corbett in view of Brewer as applied above, and further in view of Kendall (US 4,702,655). Modified Corbett does not discuss the material strengths of the fastener. Kendall discloses a fastener similar to modified Corbett but teaches the mandrel to be made of an iron alloy with a hardness greater than Rockwell 45Hrc (column 3, paragraph beginning line 22). Before the effective filing date of the claimed invention it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to make the mandrel of modified Corbett

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of the same material as disclosed in Kendell because Kendell teaches the material to be well suited for blind fastener applications such as in modified Corbett.

Response to Remarks

Applicant's remarks have been considered but are moot in light of the new grounds of rejection. The rejection was modified to basically mirror one of the proposed rejection in the IPR of the parent application.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any nonprovisional extension fee (37 CFR 1.17(a)) pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to FLEMMING SAETHER whose telephone number is (571)272-7071. The examiner can normally be reached M-F 8:30 - 7:00 eastern.

Examiner interviews are available via telephone, in-person, and video conferencing using a USPTO supplied web-based collaboration tool. To schedule an interview, applicant is encouraged to use the USPTO Automated Interview Request (AIR) at <http://www.uspto.gov/interviewpractice>.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christine Mills can be reached at 571-272-8322. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of published or unpublished applications may be obtained from Patent Center. Unpublished application information in Patent Center is available to registered users. To file and manage patent submissions in Patent Center, visit: <https://patentcenter.uspto.gov>. Visit <https://www.uspto.gov/patents/apply/patent-center> for more information about Patent Center and <https://www.uspto.gov/patents/docx> for information about filing in DOCX format. For additional questions, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/FLEMMING SAETHER/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3675

<i>Index of Claims</i> 	Application/Control No. 18/404,525	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination Wilcox et al.
	Examiner FLEMMING SAETHER	Art Unit 3675

✓	Rejected	-	Cancelled	N	Non-Elected	A	Appeal
=	Allowed	÷	Restricted	I	Interference	O	Objected

CLAIMS										
☐ Claims renumbered in the same order as presented by applicant					☐ CPA		☐ T.D.		☐ R.1.47	
CLAIM		DATE								
Final	Original	08/23/2024	03/28/2025	04/19/2025	09/30/2025	12/02/2025				
	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	4	✓	-	-	-	-				
	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	6	✓	-	-	-	-				
	7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	9	✓	-	-	-	-				
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	12	✓	-	-	-	-				
	13	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	14	✓	-	-	-	-				
	15	✓	-	-	-	-				
	16	✓	-	-	-	-				
	17	✓	-	-	-	-				
	18	✓	-	-	-	-				
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	21		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	22		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	23		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	24		✓	✓	✓	✓				
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	26		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	27		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	28		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	29		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	30		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	31		✓	✓	✓	-				
	32		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	33		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	34		✓	✓	✓	✓				
	35					✓				
	36					✓				
	37					✓				
	38					✓				
	39					✓				
	40					✓				
	41					✓				

Search Notes 	Application/Control No. 18/404,525	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination Wilcox et al.
	Examiner FLEMMING SAETHER	Art Unit 3675

CPC - Searched*		
Symbol	Date	Examiner
F16B 5/04; 7/14; 13/061, 065, 066; 19/04, 10, 1054, 1081, 109	08/23/2024	rsd
Y10T 29/49943, 49956	08/23/2024	rsd
F16B 19/1045, 19/1054	03/28/2025	FS

CPC Combination Sets - Searched*		
Symbol	Date	Examiner

US Classification - Searched*			
Class	Subclass	Date	Examiner
411	34, 37, 43, 44, 60.1, 80.1, 500-501	08/23/2024	rsd

* See search history printout included with this form or the SEARCH NOTES box below to determine the scope of the search.

Search Notes		
Search Notes	Date	Examiner
Inventors name search	08/23/2024	rsd
Forward / backward citation searching	08/23/2024	rsd
Text searching	08/23/2024	rsd
Reviewed similar case 17/423,980 (US 11,885,358 B2)	08/23/2024	rsd
updated search history is attached	03/28/2025	FS
search history is attached	04/19/2025	FS
updated search history is attached	09/30/2025	FS
updated search history is attached	12/02/2025	FS

/FLEMMING SAETHER/ Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3675	
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<i>Search Notes</i> 	Application/Control No. 18/404,525	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination Wilcox et al.
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Interference Search			
US Class/CPC Symbol	US Subclass/CPC Group	Date	Examiner

/FLEMMING SAETHER/ Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3675	
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT	Application Number		18404525
	Filing Date		2024-01-04
	First Named Inventor	Robert B. Wilcox	
	Art Unit	3675	
	Examiner Name	FLEMMING SAETHER	
	Attorney Docket Number	118508/US02/PCTNS/180639	

U.S. PATENTS						Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Inventor of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	4846611		1989-07-11	SADRI et al.	
	2	10267347	B2	2019-04-23	Koontz et al.	
	3	10309436	B2	2019-06-04	He et al.	
	4	11559836	B2	2023-01-24	Keller et al.	
	5	11143226	B2	2021-10-12	Vovan	
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	7	11098742	B2	2021-08-24	Athas et al.	
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	9	5429464		1995-07-04	Eshraghi	
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	11	7980800	B2	2011-07-19	Kleinman et al.	
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	15	10190617	B2	2019-01-29	Anasis et al.	
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	17	10215210	B2	2019-02-26	Busby	
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	20	2795989		1957-06-18	Koenig	
	21	3288016		1966-11-29	Reynolds	
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	23	7824141	B2	2010-11-02	Jones et al.	
	24	10081049	B2	2018-09-25	Liu et al.	
	25	10794415	B2	2020-10-06	McGee et al.	
	26	9284971	B2	2016-03-15	Pratt	
	27	11421724	B2	2022-08-23	Quaresma et al.	
	28	8529177	B2	2013-09-10	Toosky et al.	
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	31	9669457	B2	2017-06-06	Bigot et al.	
	32	7303366	B2	2007-12-04	Smith	
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	34	4246828		1981-01-27	Tamashiro	
	35	4521147		1985-06-04	King Jr. et al.	

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	1	20160215808	A1	2016-07-28	Brewer et al.		
	2	20180111184	A1	2018-04-26	Corbett et al.		
	3	20180149183	A1	2018-05-31	Hersant		
	4	20130047411	A1	2013-02-28	Luhm		

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	5	20050002760	A1	2005-01-06	Hayashi et al.	
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	1	2018075428	WO	A1	2018-04-26	Arconic Inc.		☐
	2	207961207	CN	U	2018-10-12	ZHANG LI		☒
	3	108131373	CN	A	2018-06-08	ZHANG LI		☒
	4	1986004965	WO	A1	1986-08-28	Huck Manufacturing Company		☐
	5	0639719	EP	A1	1995-02-22	VVG BEFESTIGUNGSTECHNI K BETEIL		☒
	6	206092643	CN	U	2017-04-12	Meishan Zhongche Fastener Technology Co. Ltd.		☒
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	8	107013545	CN	A	2017-08-04	AEROSPACE PRECISION PRODUCTS CORP		☒

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9	102004042479	DE	A1	2006-05-18	BERGNER VERBINDUNGSTECHNI K GMBH & CO.	☒
10	108799293	CN	A	2018-11-13	AEROSPACE PRECISION PRODUCTS CORP	☒
11	2301994	DE	A1	1973-07-26	AERPAT AG	☒
12	7301515	DE	U	1973-06-28	AERPAT AG	☒
13	29817855	DE	U1	2000-02-17	EMHART INC.	☒
14	2210464	FR	A1	1974-07-12	AURIOL ET CIE ETS	☒
15	3923263	DE	A1	1991-01-24	HONSEL NIETEN & METALLWARENFAB	☒

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NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1	Gesipa, Blind Rivets and Riveting Tools, GESIPA Fasteners USA, Inc., 2007, 36 pages. https://colombiapneumatic.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CATALOGO-GESIPA.pdf	☐
	2	PLT5002 INSTALLATION AND INSPECTION SPECIFICATION FOR VISU-LOK® II BLIND FASTENERS, September 26, 2007, 20 pages, https://trs aero.com/monogramaerospace/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/03/PLT5002_Installation_Visu_Lok.pdf	☐

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3	Hylwa et al., Blind Riveting 101, December 31, 2010, https://rivet.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Blind-Riveting-101-Fall 2010.pdf	☐
4	Höglund, T. Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, TALAT Lecture 2302 Design of Joints, EAA - European Aluminium Association, revised December 31, 1998, https://aluminium-guide.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2302 .	☐
5	PETITION FOR INTER PARTES REVIEW UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 42.100, Stanley Black & Decker, Inc. Petitioner v. Howmet Aerospace Inc. Patent Owner, IPR2025-01581, U.S. Patent No. 11,885,358. October 21, 2025, 92 pages.	☐
6	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1001, U.S. Patent No. 11,885,358, Wilcox et al., 11 pages.	☐
7	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1002, Declaration of Dr. Kim Cameron, 125 pages.	☐
8	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1003, U.S.P.A.P. 2018/0111184A1, Corbett et al., 7 pages.	☐
9	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1004, U.S.P.A.P. 2016/0215808A1, Brewer et al., 28 pages.	☐
10	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1005, U.S. Patent No. 4,702,655, Kendall et al., 10 pages.	☐
11	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1006, U.S.P.A.P. 2006/0251490A1, Kleinman et al., 13 pages.	☐
12	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1007, Prosecution History of U.S. Application No. 18/404,525 (Continuation Of The '358 Patent), April 23, 2025, Office Action, 9 pages.	☐
13	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1008, U.S. Patent No. 4,203,346, Hall et al., 9 pages.	☐

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14	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1009, Prosecution History of EP 3921552 (EP Counterpart to the '358 Patent), August 22, 2022, Applicant Letter, 4 pages.	☐
15	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1010, U.S.P.A.P. 2014/0271024A1, Jones, 10 pages.	☐
16	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1011, Prosecution History of the '358 Patent, October 31, 2023, Response to Office Action, 6 pages.	☐
17	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1012, U.S. Patent No. 7,156,596, Makino, 16 pages.	☐
18	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1013, Prosecution History of U.S. Application No. 18/404,525 (Continuation of the '358 Patent), October 2, 2025, Office Action, 7 pages.	☐
19	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1014, U.S.P.A.P. 2005/0260056 A1, Denham, Issued 2005, 13 pages.	☐
20	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1015, U.S. Pat. No. 4,907,922, Jeal et al., 10 pages.	☐
21	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1016, EP Patent Application Publication No. 0 365 227 A1 (published 1990), 9 pages.	☐
22	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1017, Richard T. Barrett, Fastener Design Manual, NASA Reference Publication 1228, ISBN 9781478352303 (published 1990), 100 pages.	☐
23	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1018, ISO 13469:2014(E), Mechanical joining — Form-fit blind rivets and (lock) bolt joints — Specifications and qualification of testing procedures, International Standard (published 2014), 22 pages.	☐
24	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1019, U.S. Pat. No. 5,315,755, Fulbright et al., 28 pages.	☐

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	25	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1020, European Patent No. 0 527 581 B1, 40 pages.	☐
	26	IPR2025-01581, Stanley Black & Decker v. Howmet - Exhibit 1021, Declaration of Benjamin L. Kiersz, 3 pages.	☐

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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered and whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.			
¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.			

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT	Application Number		18404525
	Filing Date		2024-01-04
	First Named Inventor	Robert B. Wilcox	
	Art Unit	3675	
	Examiner Name	FLEMMING SAETHER	
	Attorney Docket Number	118508/US02/PCTNS/180639	

TIMING STATEMENT

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

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

OR

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

☐ See attached timing statement under 37 CFR 1.97(e).

☐ A timing statement under 37 CFR 1.97(e) is not submitted herewith.

TIMING FEE

☒ The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(p) has been submitted herewith.

COPIES

☐ An identification of an earlier application pursuant to 37 CFR 1.98(d)(1) is attached.

SIZE FEE ASSERTION

Please see 37 CFR 1.17(v) and the [IDS Auto-Load Instructions](#) for completing this form to make the appropriate selection of an assertion under 37 CFR 1.98. For the information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted herewith, the applicant or patent owner certifies the following with respect to the cumulative number of applicant-provided or patent-owner provided items of information submitted to date including those in the accompanying IDS (select only one):

☐ No IDS size fee is required under 37 CFR 1.17(v) at this time.

☒ The IDS is accompanied by the IDS size fee under 37 CFR 1.17(v)(1).

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☐ The IDS is accompanied by the IDS size fee under 37 CFR 1.17(v)(3).

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with 37 CFR 1.33 and 11.18. Please see 37 CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Robert J. Sovesky/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2025-10-23
Name/Print	Robert J. Sovesky	Registration Number	73798

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

Application Number	18404525
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This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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