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IN REPLY REFER TO

Attorney Docket No. 109684
21 September 2020

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Serial Number	16/928,041
Filing Date	14 July 2020
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MAGNETIC MOTION COMPENSATION SYSTEM

STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT INTEREST

[0001] The invention described herein was made in the performance of official duties by employees of the U.S. Department of the Navy and may be manufactured, used, or licensed by or for the U.S. Government for any governmental purpose without payment of any royalties thereon.

CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER PATENT APPLICATIONS

[0002] None.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1) Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention is directed to a system that compensates heave motion and employs magnetic fields to avoid an overload of a tow cable and an attached load.

2) Description of the Prior Art

[0004] Motion compensation systems monitor and react to vessel motion to avoid overload of a cable connected to an object in the water. These systems assist in reducing the load on the cable due to a heaving vessel.

[0005] The motions of a vessel in a seaway make overboard launching and recovery and underwater operations more difficult.

[0006] The principal cause of these motions is the vertical motion of the vessel, known as heave. These difficulties increase with higher sea states.

[0007] When a heavy body is towed from a surface vessel in high sea states, the cable can lose tension when the vessel heaves downward. Snap loads can then occur when the vessel heaves upward and the cable suddenly becomes taut. Conventional motion compensation systems mitigate snap loads, but such systems have technical problems and tend to be large and expensive. It is thus desirable to have an efficient and less expensive alternative for mitigating snap loads.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] It is a primary object and general purpose of the present invention to use magnetic fields and Lenz's law to generate an electro-motive force that opposes and mitigates heave motion of a moving tow cable.

[0009] In accordance with the invention, a motion compensation system comprises a cable and a pair of panels. The panels are a first panel on a first side of the cable and a second panel on a second side of the cable. Each panel has a magnetic field. A conducting loop is attached to the cable such that the loop is between the first panel and the second panel.

[0010] According to an exemplary system herein, the system includes a cable-suspended load handling system and the motion compensation system. The handling system is mounted on a vessel and includes a cable attached to a load in the water. The motion compensation system is operationally attached to the load handling system.

[0011] The motion compensation system has a pair of panels including a first panel locatable on a first side of the cable and a second panel locatable on a second side of the cable. Each panel has a magnetic field. The motion compensation system also includes a conducting loop attached to the cable. The conducting loop is located between the first panel and the second panel. The force of the motion compensation system is transferred to the cable to compensate for heaving motion and to stabilize the load or the object.

[0012] Another embodiment of the system has a first panel with a first magnetic field having magnetic flux disposed in a first direction and a second panel parallel to the first panel and spaced apart from the first panel. The second panel has a second magnetic field having magnetic flux disposed in a second direction.

[0013] The first magnetic field is parallel to the second magnetic field. A conducting loop is located between the first panel and the second panel. The conducting loop can be attached to a cable connected to a load suspended in water. Compensating force generated by the first magnetic field and the second magnetic field is transferred to the cable to compensate for heaving motion of the vessel and to stabilize the load.

[0014] The present invention represents a more efficient and less costly alternative to mitigate snap loads. The inventive alternative can also be used with conventional motion compensation systems to reduce their size and complexity.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent upon reference to the following description of the preferred embodiments and to the drawings, wherein corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views of the drawings and wherein:

[0016] **FIG. 1** illustrates a towing system with a tow cable under tension;

[0017] **FIG. 2** illustrates the towing system with the tow cable under a slack condition;

[0018] **FIG. 3** illustrates a conducting loop in a magnetic field as part of the motion compensation system of the present invention;

[0019] **FIG. 4** illustrates a towing system with the motion compensation system of the present invention;

[0020] **FIG. 5** illustrates operation of the motion compensation system; and

[0021] **FIG. 6** illustrates a towing system having a variant motion compensation system.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0022] The motion of a ship can put an extreme burden on a load handling system. This burden may exceed the capability of the mounts, fixtures, and cables in the load handling system.

[0023] **FIG. 1** depicts a cable-suspended load handling system **100**. The handling system **100** includes a winch **104** mounted on a vessel **200**. A cable **110** is deployed from the winch **104** through a sheave **114**. The cable **110** of the cable-suspended load handling system **100** is in a taut state.

[0024] **FIG. 2** shows the cable **110** in a slack state after the vessel **200** heaves downward. When the vessel **200** heaves upward again, the cable **110** rapidly transitions back to a taut state, which causes a tension surge.

[0025] Embodiments disclosed herein use Lenz’s law to provide heave motion compensation for a cable mounted system. Lenz’s law states that a current will be induced in a conductor in the direction that opposes a change in the circuit or the magnetic field that produces it. When a conducting loop moves relative to a magnetic field, it produces an induced current that opposes the relative motion.

[0026] **FIG. 3** depicts a uniform magnetic field **B** and a conducting loop **300**. The uniform magnetic field **B** is perpendicular to the plane containing the loop **300** and at least a portion of the loop is in the magnetic field. As shown in the figure, the loop **300** is rectangular with a width l and is in motion at a constant speed v.

[0027] When the loop **300** moves relative to the magnetic field **B**, a current i is induced in the loop that generates a force that opposes the motion. The magnitude of the force that opposes the motion is proportional to the speed v.

[0028] As the loop **300** moves, the portion of the flux Φ_B of the magnetic field **B** inside the loop is calculated in Equation **(1)**

$$\Phi_B = Blx, \tag{1}$$

where x is the instantaneous length from the left edge of the loop to the right edge of the magnetic field $\boldsymbol{B}$ in Fig. 3. Using Equation **(2)**; the electromagnetic field ε is

$$\varepsilon = -\frac{d\Phi_B}{dt} = Blv \tag{2}$$

in which v is the speed that the loop **300** is pulled through the magnetic field.

[0029] The current in the loop given by Equation **(3)**

$$i = \frac{\varepsilon}{R} = \frac{Blv}{R}, \tag{3}$$

where R is the resistance of the loop. Each conductive leg of the loop **300** (e.g., conductors **302, 304, 306**) carries the same current (i.e., $i_1 = i_2 = i_3 = i$). The current i in the loop **300** creates forces $\mathbf{F_1}$, $\mathbf{F_2}$, and $\mathbf{F_3}$ that respectively act on the conductors **302, 304, 306,** by Equation **(4)**

$$\mathbf{F} = i\mathbf{l} \times \boldsymbol{B}. \tag{4}$$

[0030] The forces $\mathbf{F_2}$ and $\mathbf{F_3}$ cancel, and the direction of $\mathbf{F_1}$ is opposite that of the velocity $\boldsymbol{v}$ of the loop **300.** For $\mathbf{F_1}$, the magnitude of the vector $\mathbf{l}$ in Equation **(4)** is the width l and its direction is aligned with that of the induced current $\boldsymbol{i_1}$ shown in **FIG. 3.** The magnitude of the force F_1 is provided by Equation **(5)**

$$F_1 = \frac{B^2 l^2 v}{R}. \tag{5}$$

[0031] Referring now to **FIG. 4,** a motion compensation system **400** is shown. The compensation system **400** comprises a set of panels. A first panel **402** has a first magnetic field with magnetic flux disposed in a first direction. The second panel **404** is parallel to the first panel **402** and is spaced apart from the first panel. The second panel **404** has a second magnetic field with magnetic flux disposed in a second direction. The first magnetic field is parallel to the second magnetic field.

[0032] The cable **110** is located between the first panel **402** and the second panel **404.** A conducting loop **406** is attached to the cable **110** by clamps **408** between the first panel **402** and the second panel **404.** The **406** loop is a rectangular shape.

[0033] The first magnetic field and the second magnetic field are formed by a plurality of magnets (either permanent magnets or electromagnets) mounted on the first panel **402** and the second panel **404** in order to approximate a uniform magnetic field strength.

[0034] When an object is towed from a surface vessel, the cable **110** can lose tension as the vessel heaves downward. Snap loads can then occur when the vessel heaves upward again and the cable **110** suddenly becomes taut. The cable **110** transitioning from a slack state (shown as a dashed line in **FIG. 4**) to a taut state (shown as a solid line in the figure) will experience an opposing force that can be approximated by the loop moving through a uniform magnetic field, as described above.

[0035] **FIG. 5** illustrates forces acting on the cable **110.** When the cable **110** rapidly transitions from a slack state to a taut state, the upward velocity "V" of the cable causes part of the conducting loop **406** to move rapidly through the magnetic field ***B*** between the first panel **402** and the second panel **404.** The movement of the conducting loop **406** through the magnetic fields induces a significant back electromagnetic force that opposes the upward motion of the cable **110.**

[0036] The force F that opposes the movement of the cable **110** is $F = B^2 l^2 v/R$, where B is the magnetic field strength, l is the cable width within the magnetic field, v is the velocity of the cable, and R is the resistance in the conducting loop **406.** The opposing force F can be estimated for the snap load problem with the following parameters: $l = 10\ m$, $v = 50\ m/s$, $B = 0.1\ T$, and $R = 0.006\ \Omega$. This leads to an opposing force $F = 8333N = 1873\ lb$, which would effectively suppress the snap load.

[0037] The resistance R can be approximated for a conducting loop **406** having a total length of one hundred feet with the conducting loop comprising ten AWG 8 wires clamped to the cable **110.** The resistance for one of the wires in the conducting loop **406** is $R = 0.06\ \Omega$, and the resistance of ten wires in parallel is $R = 0.006\ \Omega$.

[0038] In some embodiments, superconducting magnets can be used in the first panel **402** and the second panel **404.** A portable cryogenic system maintains the required temperature so that a superconducting loop can be used as the conducting loop **406.** Such cryogenic systems reduce the weight relative to degaussing systems (that make use of copper coils) by as much as 80% with the use of a long flexible cryostat that uses gaseous helium. When such a cryogenic system is deployed on a vessel, the motion compensation system **400** can leverage existing cryogenic system to significantly reduce weight with superconducting coils for electromagnets in the first panel **402** and the second panel **404**.

[0039] For a conducting loop comprising a superconductor, $R \to 0$, so that $F \to \infty$, indicating that the previous analysis is not valid for a superconducting loop and needs to be modified as taught by R.H. Romer (European Journal of Physics 11(2), 103, 1990); hereby incorporated by reference. A superconducting loop subjected to a constant applied force F leads to the velocity: $v = Fl/(wB)^2 \sin \omega_0 t$, where $\omega_0 = wB/\sqrt{ml}$ and $l = \propto \mu_0 w$, where $\propto = O(1)$. If $m = 20\ kg$ (the weight of that section of cable) and $l = 10^{-5}\ H$, then $\omega_0 = 70.71\ rad/s$, $f = 11.25\ Hz$, and $v = 10^{-5} F \sin \omega_0 t$, (only an oscillatory motion is allowed for the superconducting version of the conducting loop **406**).

[0040] This effectively suppresses snap loads, since the cable velocity must maintain a harmonic (sinusoidal) time dependence during a low-tension state, precluding any velocity having an impulsive time dependence that is characteristic of tension surges. The cable velocity must also maintain a harmonic time dependence during a high-tension state. A non-harmonic time dependence for the cable velocity would require an infinite force and is thus impossible.

[0041] Referring to **FIG. 6**, a motion compensation system **600** in another embodiment includes a magnetic tow cable **602** disposed in a conducting sleeve **604**. The conducting sleeve **604** can be made from braided copper wire or other appropriate material. The rapid velocity of the magnetic tow cable **602** moving through the conducting sleeve **604** during a snap load event can dissipate a significant amount of kinetic energy via eddy currents generated in the conducting sleeve.

[0042] The opposing force F for this case is taught by G. Donoso et al. (European Journal of Physics 30, 855-869, 2009), and is specified by Equation **(6)**

$$F = \frac{15}{64}\pi^2 \sigma v \mu^2 \left(\frac{1}{a^3} - \frac{1}{b^3}\right). \quad \textbf{(6)}$$

Here a and b are the inner and outer conductor radii of the conducting sleeve **604**, respectively, $\sigma = 5.92 \times 10^7 \Omega^{-1} \mathrm{m}^{-1}$ (the electrical conductivity of copper) and $\mu = 4.7 \times 10^{-8}\ T \cdot m^3$ (i.e., the magnitude of the magnetic dipole moment of a 3.2 mm long cylindrical, rare earth (SmCo) magnet having a 12.5 mm diameter). Note that this formula specifies the opposing force F for a single such magnet moving through the conducting sleeve **604**. The opposing force for the magnetic tow cable **602** moving through a 300 meter length of such a conducting sleeve **604** can be estimated by summing the effect of 100,000 of such magnets, leading to an opposing force of $F = 5 \times 10^6$ N.

[0043] The magnetic tow cable **602** does not have to be a permanent magnet. A copper wire coil built into the tow cable **602** in a helix pattern can support a magnetic field to produce a similar opposing force. Furthermore, since the duty cycles for active sonar systems are typically small (e.g., 10%); the unused part of the duty cycle could generate a magnetic field with the existing copper conductors. This would have the advantage of not requiring additional conductors, which would otherwise increase the cable diameter.

[0044] The invention has been described with references to specific embodiments. While particular values, relationships, materials, and steps have been set forth for purposes of describing concepts of the present disclosure; it will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art that numerous variations and/or modifications may be made to the invention as shown in the disclosed embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of the basic concepts and operating principles of the invention as broadly described.

MAGNETIC MOTION COMPENSATION SYSTEM

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system is provided to compensate for heave of a vessel in which the compensation system has a first panel with a first magnetic field having magnetic flux disposed in a first direction and a second panel parallel to the first panel. The second panel has a second magnetic field having magnetic flux disposed in a second direction with the first magnetic field parallel to the second magnetic field. A conducting loop is located between the first panel and the second panel. The conducting loop is attachable to a cable connected to a load suspended in water. Compensating force generated by the first magnetic field and the second magnetic field transfers to the cable to compensate for heaving motion of the vessel and stabilize the cable-connected load in the water.

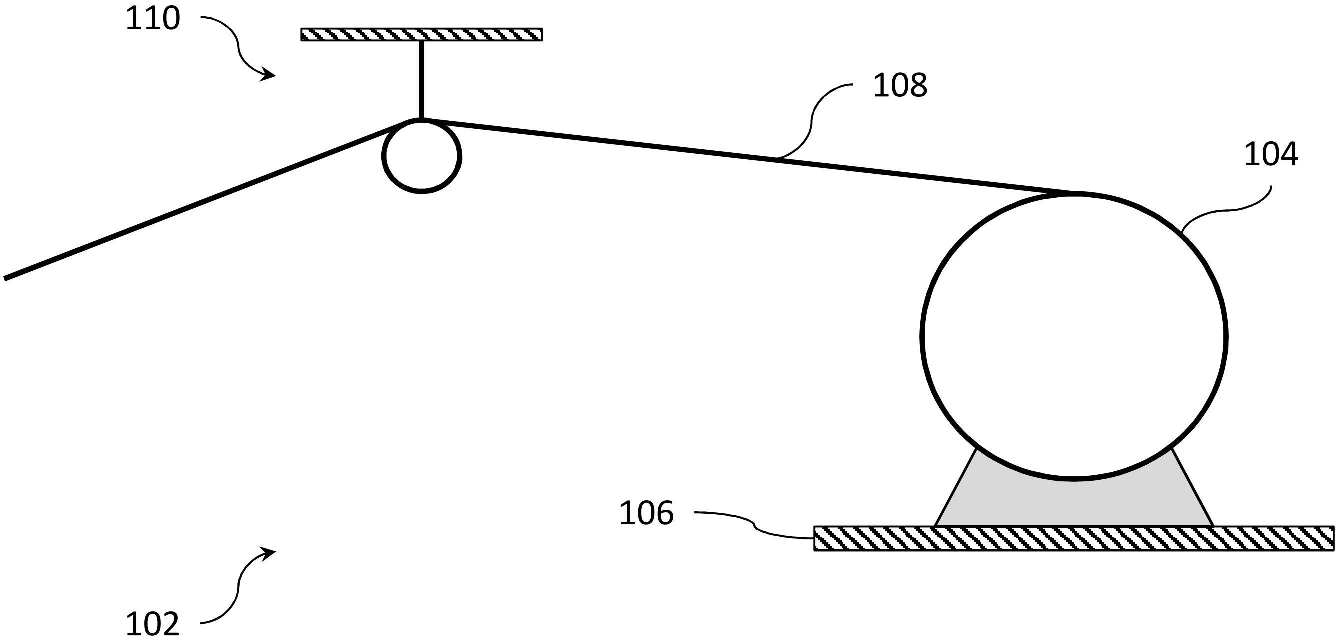

FIG. 1

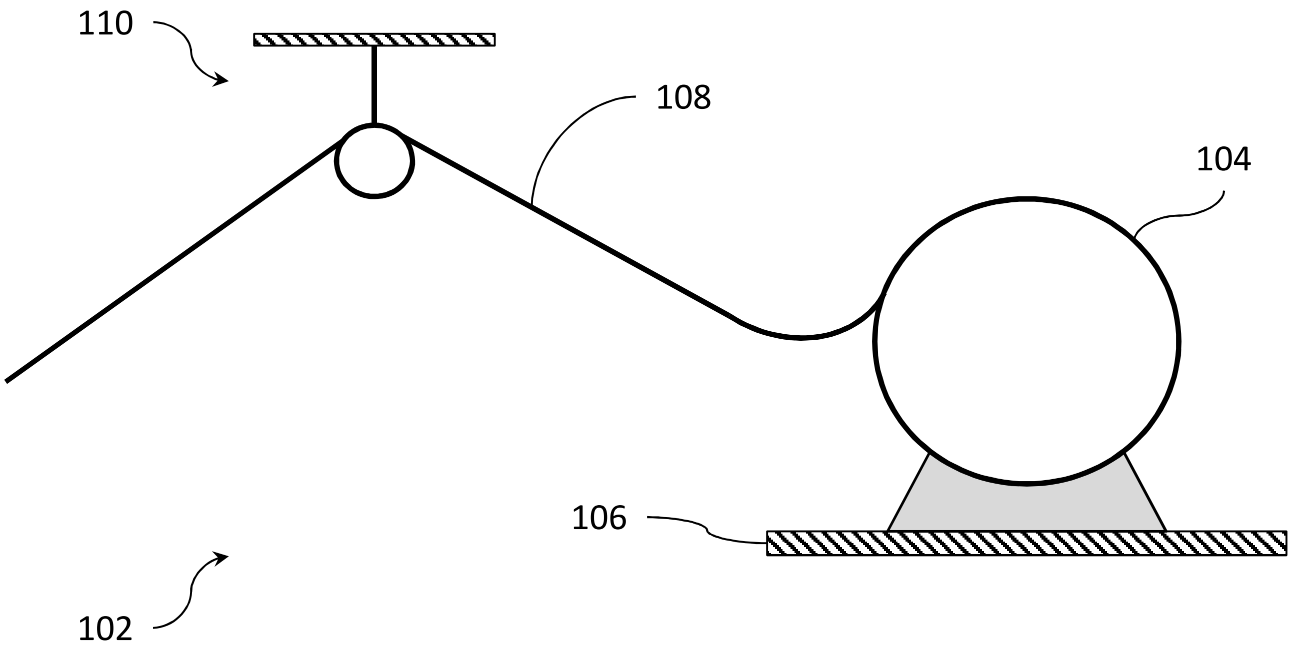

FIG. 2

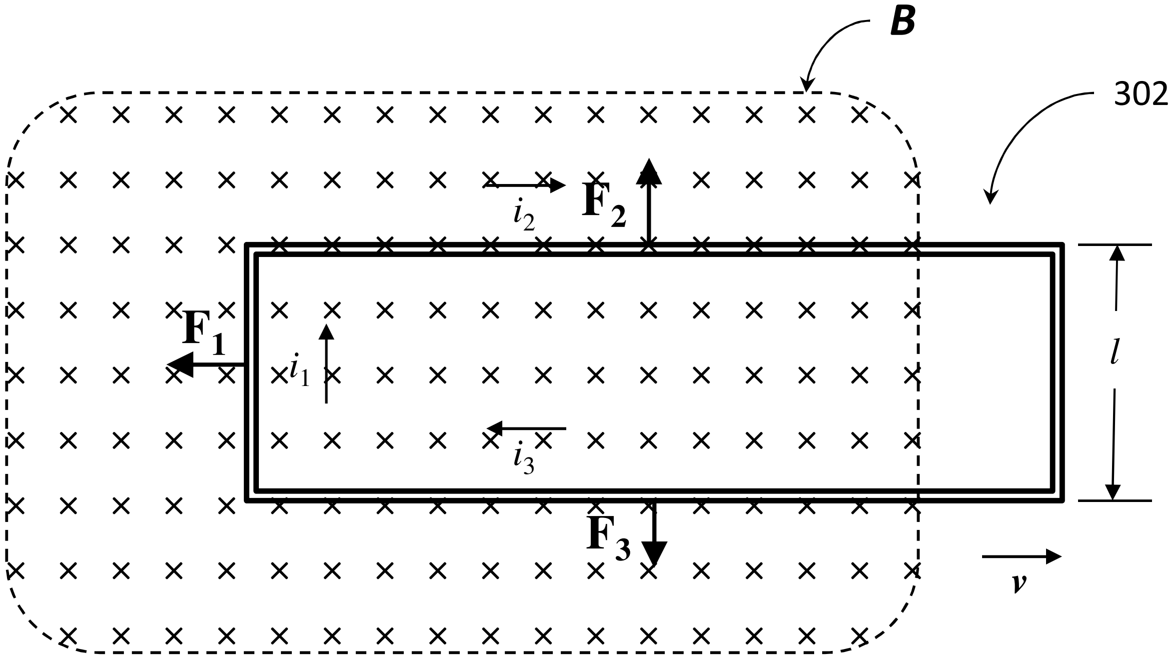

FIG. 3

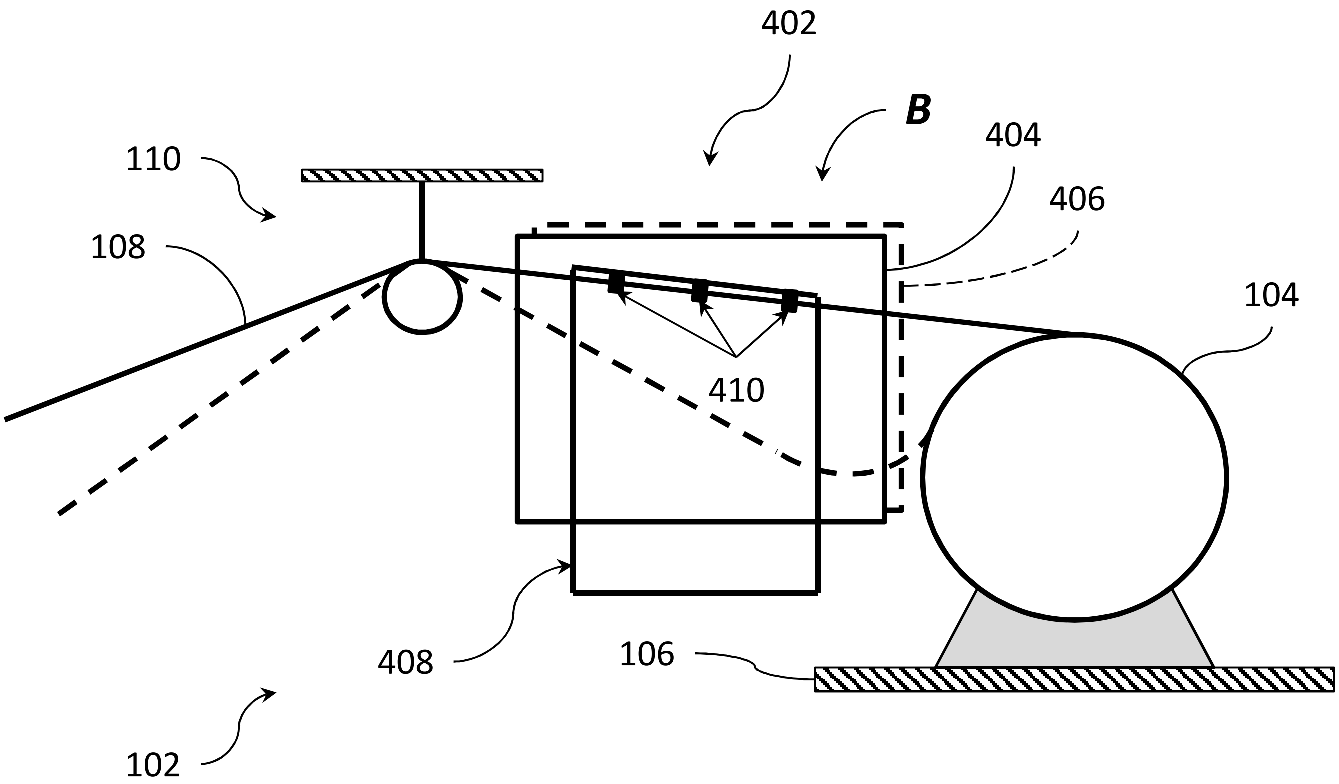

FIG. 4

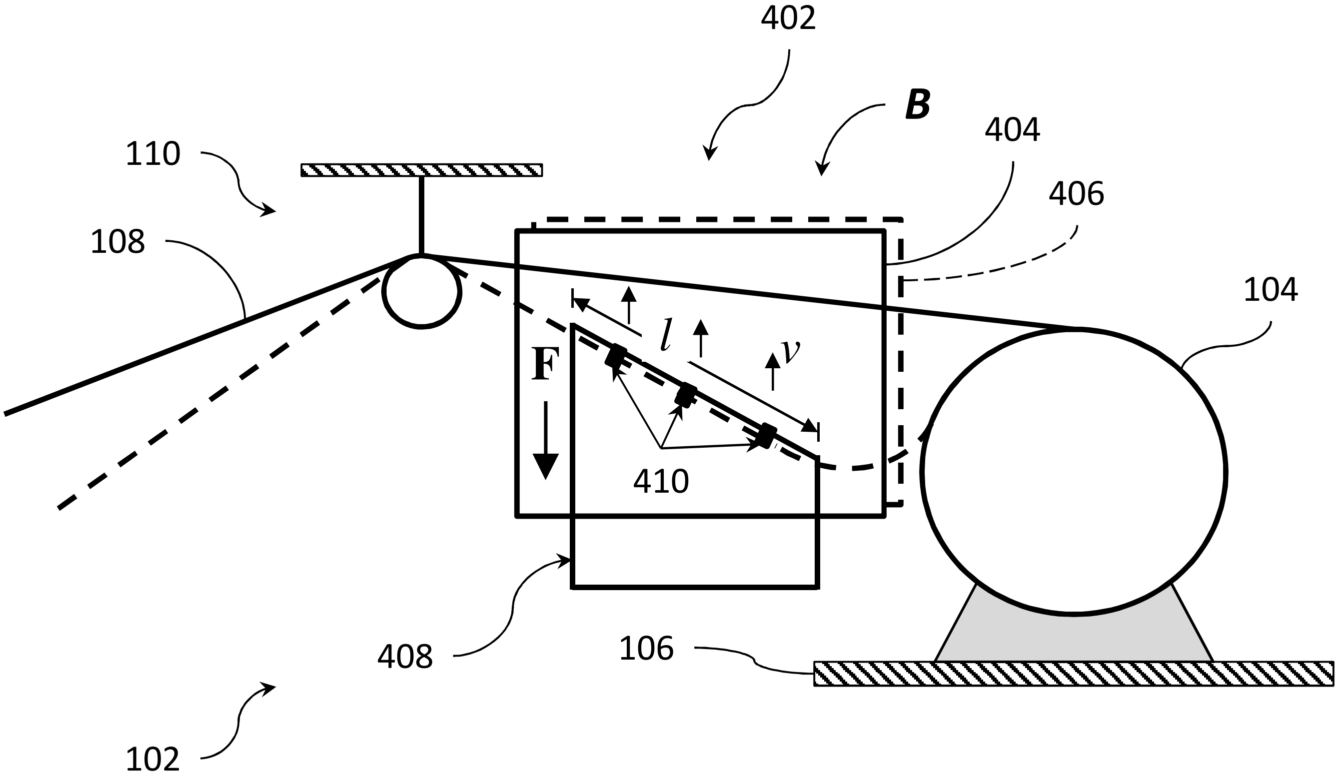

FIG. 5

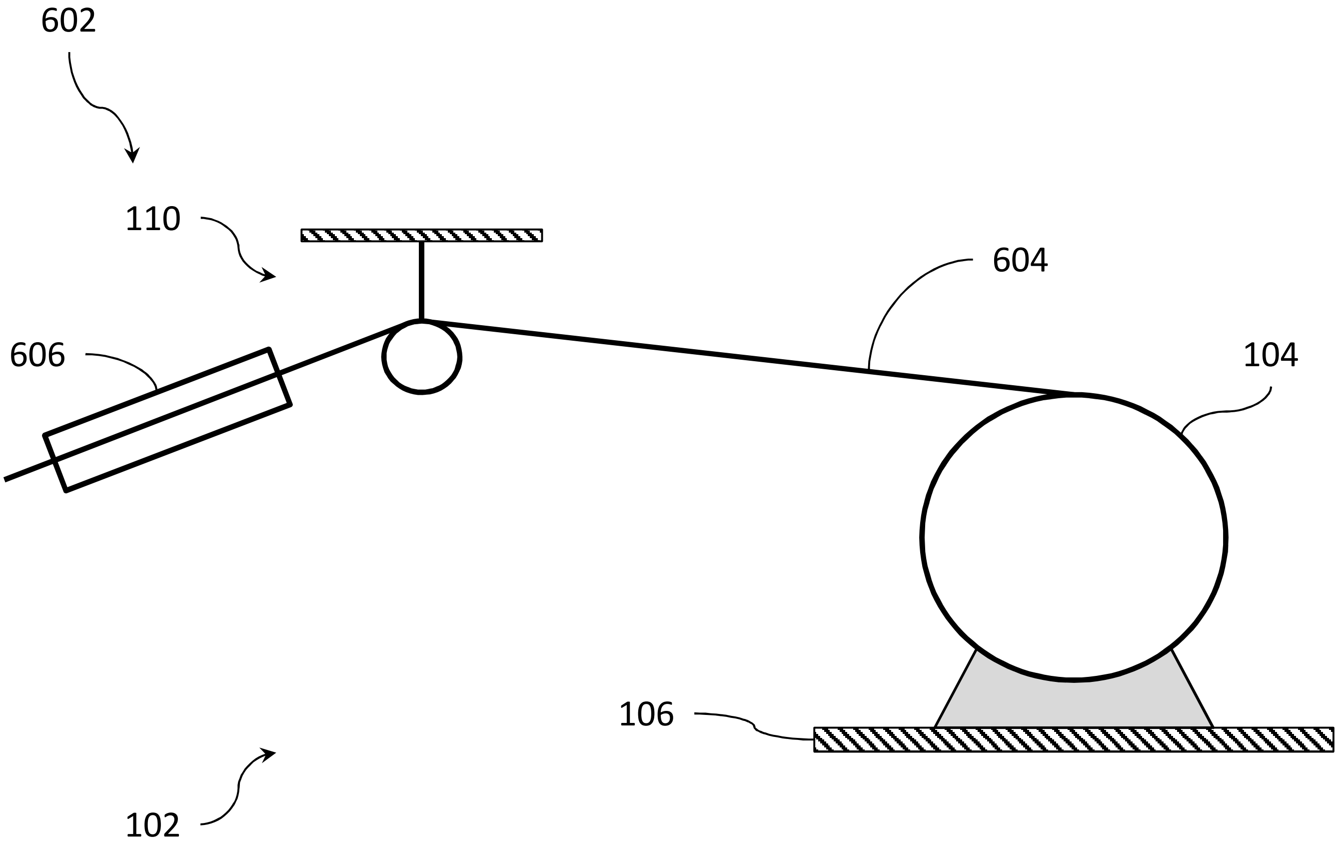

FIG. 6