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Abstract

The invention provides a portable electronic parking permit tag for vehicles transporting disabled persons, comprising: a memory module for storing data regarding the person(s) allowed to activate the tag, the stored data representing at least a portion of
5 the personal biometric information of each of the person(s); a biometric identification module for obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate the tag; a processing unit for operating the tag according to the obtained biometric data; a display unit for indicating the status of the tag, whether activated or deactivated; means for deactivating the tag; a transmitter for periodically transmitting, to its vicinity, secured ID
10 data related to the disabled person who activated the tag, to be received and verified by a parking officer; and means for powering the tag.

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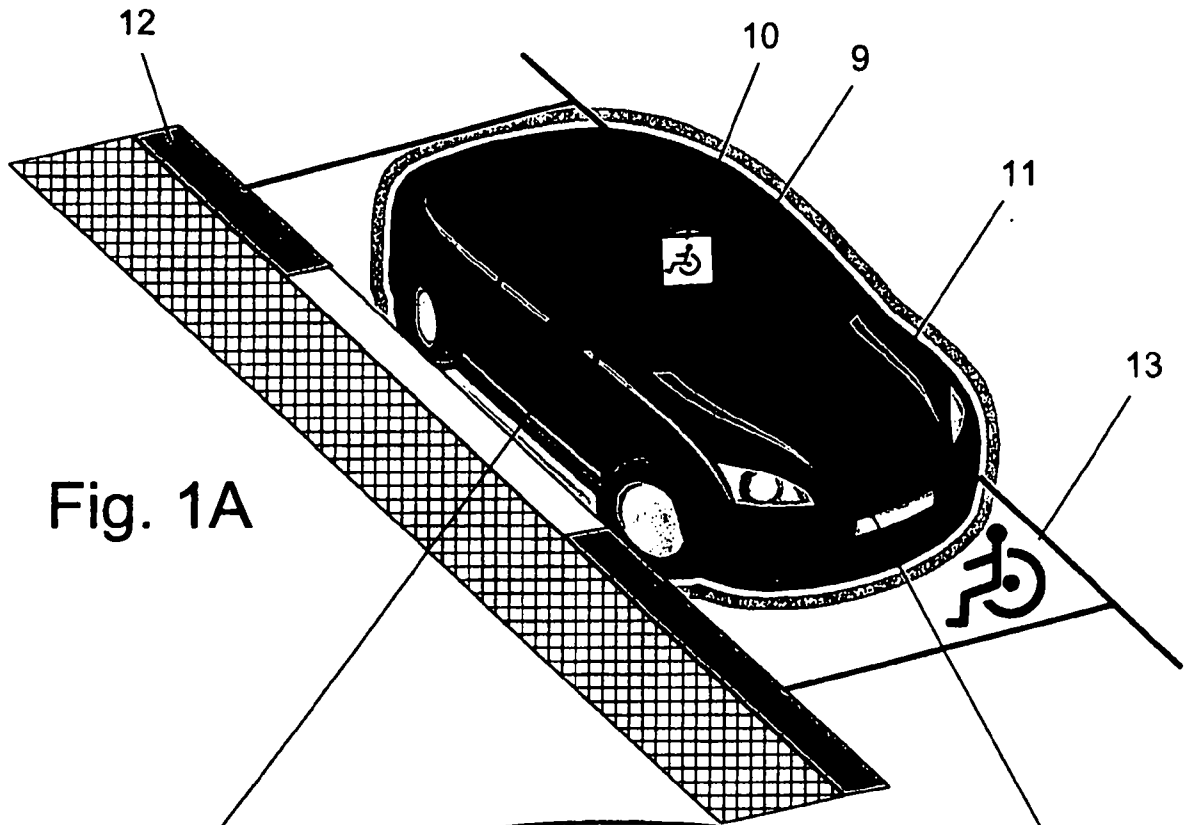


Fig. 1A

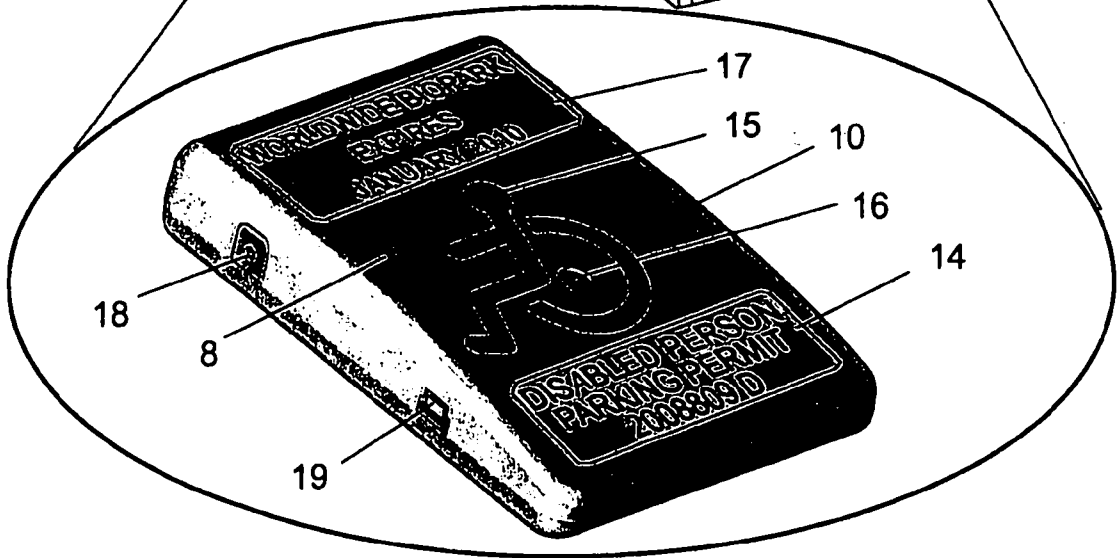


Fig. 1B

A PORTABLE ELECTRONIC PARKING PERMIT TAG AND A METHOD FOR USING THEREOF

Related Application

This application is based on and claims the benefit of the filing and priority dates of
5 PCT application no. PCT/IL2009/001051 filed 9 November 2009, the content of which
as filed is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to the field of vehicle parking permits for disabled
persons. More specifically, the invention relates to an automated electronic
10 identification system for preventing the abuse and forging of handicap parking permits
for vehicles, such as tags or badges.

Background of the Invention

The increasing amount of motor vehicles on the roads around the world is a topic of
concern. The on growing numbers of vehicles have created a major parking problem
15 worldwide. The present situation in most major cities is a severe shortage of parking
spaces and high parking fees. Since every country has a law providing disabled
parking permits that allow persons with either long-term or temporary mobility
impairment to park in designated handicapped parking spaces (and in places that
parking is normally forbidden to the public) at all public and private facilities, parking
20 permits are being forged or abused by the falsifier in order to gain a convenient and
free parking space. For example, a phenomenon of abusing disabled parking badges
is taking place in the form of using a handicap badge by other unauthorized family
members, or other forgers as well as using a handicap badge of a person who
desisted.

25 The present official issued permit tags consist of the widely used wheelchair symbol
which is usually printed on a tag or a badge made of plastic or paper, making it easy to
copy and fake. In order to save parking fees, forgers are used to park in places that are
forbidden for ordinary people but are allowed to handicapped people. As a result,
municipal authorities around the world are losing an enormous amount of income as a
30 result of the situation where a substantial percentage of the handicap parking is in fact
done by forged parking tags.

Furthermore, if forgers sometimes make a high-quality copy of a genuine parking permit, such that a parking officer inspecting a fake parking permit will find it hard to distinguish from a genuine one. Even if the parking officer is suspecting a fake parking permit, in most cases the officer has a cumbersome way or even has no way of
5 verifying the suspicions and validating if the permit is genuine. Thus, a parking permit forger benefits a free and convenient parking space from the present situation with practically very small chances of being caught in his felony, leaving the needy person without a parking space as the law requires. As a result, persons with handicap parking tag are forced to park their cars on sidewalks, bus stops or near fire taps, making the
10 public environment disordered and dangerous.

In the prior art, several attempts were made in order to prevent from unauthorized drivers or vehicles to occupy a parking place dedicated to handicapped persons, such as US 5,476,338, which discloses a barrier apparatus. However solutions of this sort require complicated structures to be built in the parking place. Furthermore, it is limited
15 only to specific parking places, where in some countries, such as Israel, vehicle carrying legal handicapped tag can park almost everywhere.

Some others prior art relates to improvements in the parking permit, as in US application No. 2008/0209781 which discloses a display device of disabled parking permit and in USP 6,819,262 which describes a parking indication sign for vehicles of
20 disabled persons, in order to avoid parking near the door of a vehicle of a handicapped person. However, both of these arrangements cannot assure the parking permit is not abused by an unauthorized person.

Other prior art relates to systems for identifying parking violations with no correlation to handicapped parking permits, such as US 5,343,237 which discloses a system for
25 detecting an illegally parked vehicle using a TV camera, and US 6,559,776 which describes a parking status and control system using a vehicle presence detector and a parking meter.

Summary of the Invention

According to a first broad aspect of the present invention, there is provided a portable
30 electronic parking permit tag for vehicles transporting disabled persons and for preventing forgery and abuse of use, comprising:

- a) casing placeable in a vehicle so that a universal disabled person symbol and parking authorization provided with said casing are visible from around the vehicle;

- 5
- b) a memory module for storing data regarding the person or persons allowed to activate said tag including name and authorization number, in which all of said stored data is burned into said memory module to prevent forgery and includes biometric information of each of the said person or persons;
 - c) a biometric identification module for obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate said tag;
 - d) at least one display unit for indicating the status of said tag, whether activated or deactivated;
 - 10 e) a processing unit for comparing said obtained biometric data with said stored data and for triggering the tag status to an activated status if said obtained biometric data and said stored data match;
 - f) a movement detector for deactivating said tag upon sensing movement of said tag, after being activated, to prevent unlawful usage of said tag;
 - 15 g) a short-range transmitter for periodically transmitting secured data related to the name and authorization number of the disabled person who activated said tag, wherein said short-range transmitted data is receivable in an unmediated way by a mobile communication device carried by a parking officer and is locally verifiable by said mobile communication device to provide parking authorization of said tag; and
 - 20 h) a power source for powering said tag.

Also disclosed is a portable electronic parking permit tag or unit for vehicle, preferably, but not limitatively, directed for disabled parking permit that automatically recognize authorized persons and identify legal parking space usage. The portable tag,
25 comprises: a) a memory module (e.g., flash memory) for storing data regarding the person(s) allowed to activate the tag, in which the stored data represent at least the personal biometric information of each of the person(s); b) a biometric identification module for obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate the tag; c) a processing unit for operating the tag according to the obtained biometric data; d) at
30 least one display unit for indicating the status of the tag, whether activated or deactivated; e) means for deactivating the tag; and f) means for powering the tag.

According to an embodiment of the invention, the tag further comprises communication means for allowing uploading or downloading data to the memory module regarding the person(s) allowed to activate the tag. Preferably, the communication means are
35 wireless communication means, wired communication means or combination of both.

Data can be uploaded to the tag from a server or a database preloaded or updated with the personal and biometric information of each of the allowed persons, using either the communication means or directly in dedicated service stations operated by the authorities.

- 5 According to an embodiment of the invention, the stored data in the memory module further comprising personal details and parking permission for each person allowed activating the tag.

Once a user is activating the tag, the system, which is pre-loaded with the authorized user's data, i.e., biometric identification, personal information and parking permissions,
10 compares the two data sets and decides upon approval or disapproval resulting in triggering a plurality of light sources to emit light and state the condition of operation. The state will be 'on' or 'approved use', if there is a positive match, and will result in a specific light color of the plurality of light sources, appropriate display on the display unit, and optionally with a voice (or sound) announcement. The state will be 'off' or
15 'disapproved use' if there is no match, and will result in different light color of the plurality of light sources (or the plurality of light sources will remain un-triggered), appropriate display on the display unit, and optionally with a voice (or sound) announcement. In this manner, once a parking officer or any other citizens are inspecting a vehicle, they can easily identify whether an authorized person is
20 displaying the parking permit or not. The software embedded in the parking permit tag or unit may include data which is adapted to the country, city and their corresponding parking permits. This data may be programmed using the operation software of the proposed parking permit unit. In addition, the parking permit unit will include the data of the authorized person (such as specific addresses, rate of disability, expiration dates),
25 as well as visible signs that can reflect specific selected data. In addition, the operating software will be protected and capable of connecting, via highly secured data channels, to updated municipal, national or international databases, for seeking and verifying data and for data updates. Software updates and installation may be done using a USB connection via a USB cable that can be used also for charging the battery
30 (using a 12 Volt plug) of the parking permit tag or unit, to be used for the long run.

According to an embodiment of the invention, the means for deactivating the tag is a movement detector. The movement detector may forward the data (such as velocity or acceleration) to the operating software for evaluating whether a received movement relates to actual parking termination, or just to false movement, such as wind, a hit by
35 another vehicle or a swing. Additionally, a GPS or a digital compass may be used to

verify any true movement before a decision regarding a false movement is made. Preferably, the movement detector implemented in the device will terminate the operation of the device when there is any movement, which indicates there is no parking position anymore.

- 5 Preferably, the means for powering the tag is independent battery, rechargeable battery, plug for allowing receiving power from external power source, such as a battery of a vehicle, or combination of two or more of them.

According to an embodiment of the invention, at least one of the display units display information regarding the person activated the tag and the corresponding parking
10 authorization. Preferably, the information is displayed electronically according to the data stored in the memory module. Alternatively, the information is printed or scribed on the faceplate of the tag.

Preferably, the electronic parking permit unit is comprised of a casing with a wheelchair
15 driver symbols on its faceplate or rear panel, an array of plurality of light sources (such as LEDs) or a light source panel placed behind the wheelchair driver symbol, for lighting the tag whenever active. The parking permit unit may include additional symbols and LEDs in different colors, whenever required. The array of LEDs may be used also to indicate the state of the parking permit unit and to illustrate the initialization process when activated. The parking permit unit may be mounted on an
20 appropriate stand, which may be used also for storing it.

According to another embodiment of the invention, the tag further comprising remotely
communication means for wirelessly communication with a remote server, having a
database of all parking authorized persons and all parking spaces. Preferably, the
remotely communication means is cellular module. Optionally, a navigation module,
25 such as Global Positioning System (GPS) or GALILEO module can be incorporated to the tag for providing the actual position of the vehicle using the tag. Preferably, the tag unit and its suitable software can be connected as an added module to parking services companies and authorities databases.

Optionally, the tag further comprises a RF (or other wireless technologies, such as
30 WiFi etc.) identification tag.

According to a second broad aspect of the present invention, there is provided a parking permit method for preventing forging and abuse of a parking tag, comprising:

- 5
- a) storing data regarding the person or persons allowed to activate said tag and that is independent of the vehicle identification, in a memory module embedded within said parking tag including name and authorization number, wherein all of said stored data is burned into said memory module to prevent forgery and includes biometric information of each of said person or persons; said tag is placeable in the vehicle so that a universal disabled person symbol and parking authorization provided on said to are visible from around the vehicle;
- 10
- b) obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate said tag via a biometric identification module in said parking tag;
- c) comparing said obtained biometric data with said stored data;
- d) triggering a tag status to an activated status in said parking tag if said obtained biometric data and said stored data match, wherein said tag is operated via a power source;
- 15
- e) periodically transmitting by said parking tag secured short-range data related to the name and authorization number of the person or persons allowed to activate said tag;
- f) displaying the status of said tag, whether activated or deactivated;
- 20
- g) receiving in an unmediated way said short-range transmitted data by a mobile communication device of a parking officer and locally verifying parking authorization of said tag; and
- h) deactivating said tag upon sensing movement of said tag after being activated indicative of completion of a parking session, to prevent unlawful usage of said tag.

25

According to a third broad aspect of the present invention, there is provided a system for verifying authorization to park a vehicle at a space designated for disabled persons, comprising:

- 30
- a) a portable electronic parking permit tag for the vehicle transporting disabled persons and for preventing forgery and abuse of use, comprising:
- i) a casing placeable in the vehicle so that a universal disabled person symbol and a parking authorization provided with said casing are visible from around the vehicle;

- 5 ii) a memory module for storing data regarding the person or persons allowed to activate said tag including name and authorization number, in which all of said stored data is burned into said memory module to prevent forgery and includes personal biometric information of each of said person or persons;
- iii) a biometric identification module for obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate said tag;
- iv) at least one display unit for indicating the status of said tag, whether activated or deactivated;
- 10 v) a processing unit for comparing said obtained biometric data with said stored data and for triggering the tag status to an activated status if said obtained biometric data and said stored data match;
- vi) a movement detector for deactivating said tag upon sensing movement of said tag, after being activated, to prevent unlawful usage of said tag;
- 15 vii) a short-range transmitter for periodically transmitting secured data related to the name and authorization number of the disabled person who activated said tag; and
- viii) a power source for powering said tag; and
- 20 b) a mobile communication device carried by a parking officer, said mobile communication device being configured to verify parking authorization of said tag and comprising a memory device in which is stored a local database of parking authorized disable people, wherein said short-range transmitted data is receivable and locally verifiable in an unmediated
- 25 way by said mobile communication device.

Also disclosed is a parking permit method for preventing forging and abuse of parking tags for vehicles, comprising:

- 30 storing data regarding the person(s) allowed to activate the tag, in a memory module embedded within the tag, wherein the stored data represents at least a portion of the personal biometric information of each of the person(s);
- obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate the tag via a biometric identification module;
- operating the tag according to the obtained biometric data, wherein the tag is operated via powering means;

periodically transmitting secured ID data related to a disabled person(s), to be received and verified by a parking officer;

displaying the status of the tag, whether activated or deactivated; and upon completing parking

5 deactivating the tag by using deactivating means embedded in the tag.

Brief Description of the Drawings

In order that the invention may be more clearly ascertained, embodiments will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

10 **Fig. 1A** is a perspective view of a vehicle parked near a pavement with the electronic parking permit display unit adjacent to the front window, with an enlarged section of the electronic parking permit;

Fig. 1B is a magnification of the parking permit unit of **Fig. 1A**, according to an embodiment of the invention;

15 **Figs. 2A to 2F** are drawing plates of the electronic parking permit portable unit, according to an embodiment of the invention: **Fig. 2A** – front view; **Fig. 2B** – side view; **Fig. 2C** – top view; **Fig. 2D** – rear view; **Fig. 2E** – a schematic view of inside the device; and **Fig. 2F** – a view of the device in a stand.

Detailed Description of Preferred Embodiments

20 **Fig. 1A** presents an electronic parking permit unit **10** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In this figure, the electronic parking permit unit **10** is placed adjacent, preferably, with its front face to the front window **9** of a motor vehicle **11**. According to an embodiment of the invention, the electronic parking permit unit **10** is portable and has relatively small physical dimensions, thus, if required it can be easily carried by hand, e.g., unit **10** can have typical dimensions of 100 mm × 65
25 mm × 14 mm.

The motor vehicle **11** is parked in a designated parking space **13** near a pavement **12**. The position of the parking permit unit **10** may vary, e.g. parking permit unit **10** can be placed to a side window, back window, to the rearview-mirror or any preferable location as long as it is in a comfortable visible place to be seen from most points of view
30 around the vehicle.

Fig. 1B schematically illustrates a magnification of the parking permit unit **10**, according to an embodiment of the invention. Parking permit unit **10** may contain any

suitable information regarding the parking permission and/or the owner of such permit unit, as usually displayed on permit tags. In this embodiment, the main features of parking permit unit **10** comprises a wheelchair symbol **15** (or any other symbol which represents a universal handicapped symbol), a display unit **17**, an identification label **14** (either electronic or printed sticker), a state indicator light **16**, a power plug **18**, a communication connector hub **19** (e.g., a USB plug) and a biometric identification module **22** (shown in **Fig. 2D**) further features and optional features of unit **10** are shown hereinafter with respect to **Figs. 2B-2E**.

Preferably, but not limitatively, the wheelchair symbol **15** is impressed into the front face **8** in such manner that when the parking permit unit **10** is activated, the light source **16** (**Fig. 2E**) illumination could be seen, since light can pass through the slits created by the impressed wheelchair symbol **15**.

Figs. 2A-2E illustrate the drawing plate for the parking permit unit **10**. **Figs. 2A-2C** illustrate the front, side and top views of the parking permit unit **10**, respectively. **Fig. 2D** illustrates a rear view of the parking permit unit **10**. Indicator light **16** and tightening elements **21** are evident, as well as a finger print plane detector portion (i.e., finger print sensor) of biometric identification module **22** (**Fig. 2D**). **Fig. 2E** discloses the basic elements inside the parking permit unit **10**, where the following elements are evident: the circuit board **27**; the casing **28**; the indicator light **16**; the power source, such as rechargeable battery unit **26**; the communication connector hub **19**; a power plug **18** (optional); a processing unit **24** and its corresponding memory unit **23**; and a communication module **25**.

Preferably, but not limitatively, unit **10** further comprises a Radio Frequency (RF) identification tag **30**; a motion detector **31**, and a speaker **32**. Motion detector **31** is incorporated in order to assure that the parking permit unit **10** is operated for actual parking and is not abused. Once the motion detector **31** detects movement after said parking permit unit **10** was activated and its user got approved, it will automatically deactivate said parking permit unit **10**. RF identification tag **30** is incorporated in order to enable the absolute identification and authorization of said parking permit unit **10** by an authorized law-enforcement officer, via suitable RF communication means, and to certify that the parking permit unit **10** is genuine.

Unit **10** can be attached to inner side of a vehicles window by any suitable attaching or hanging means, such as by slots **20** (**Fig. 2C**) which allows the parking permit unit **10** to be hanged from the rearview mirror using a suitable cord. Alternatively, the parking

permit unit may be mounted using an assigned stand **33** (shown in **Fig. 2F**) that can be used also as carrier.

According to an embodiment of the invention, the biometric identification module consists of a finger print sensor **22**, but of course it can be any other biometric detector means of absolute identification of a user, e.g. voice signature, iris signature etc. as are known to a person skilled in the art. Data is initially stored in said parking permit unit **10** using either the communication means or directly in service stations operated by the authorities. Said electronic parking permit unit **10** is operated by DC voltage from said rechargeable battery unit **26**, and preferably, but not limitatively, a backup battery (not shown) is installed in said parking permit unit **10**. The user activates said parking permit unit **10** via the finger print sensor **22**, which is pre-loaded with the authorized user's data in memory module **23**. Once said parking permit unit **10** is activated, said state indicator light **16** is turned on (illuminates). Said processor unit **24** compares the activating user data set with the data set stored upon memory unit **23** and performs a decision, using standard comparison algorithms, upon approval or disapproval resulting in triggering said wheel chair symbol **15** and display unit **17**. The activating state will be 'on' or 'approved use', if there is a positive match, and will result in a specific electronic display message on display unit **17**. The deactivating state will be 'off' or 'disapproved use' if there is no match, and will result in different display message on display unit **17**. The parking permit unit **10** periodically transmits secured ID data (for example, the name of the disabled person and his authorization number) to its close vicinity. The transmitted ID data may then be received and verified by the parking officer. The municipal parking authorities will be able to read and decode the transmitted secured data, for further verification and authentication, as long as the parking permit unit is active.

In this manner, once a parking officer is inspecting a vehicle he can easily identify whether an authorized person is displaying the parking permit or not. As an option, movement sensor, such as motion detectors **31** (**Fig. 2E**), implemented in the unit **10** will terminate the operation of unit **10** when the vehicle **11** is not in a parking position anymore, or if the permit unit **10** is moved or handed to other unauthorized person after pre-activated by the authorized person.

According to an embodiment of the invention, a movement detector is incorporated into parking permit unit **10**, in such fashion that once the parking permit unit **10** is activated and the movement detector is detecting movement of more than a predetermined period of time, then unit **10** will be turned off (i.e., deactivated mode). Preferably, the

movement sensor terminates the operation of unit 10 after sensing a continuous movement over a relatively short predetermined period of time (e.g., 5 seconds).

Another embodiment of said parking permit unit 10 discloses a remote server, having a communication means, such as internet, and a database of all parking authorized disabled people and all parking spaces. Once a user is activating said parking permit unit 10, the communication module 25, preferably a cellular or other wireless module, is contacting said remote server and transferring the user data and actual position using a GPS (Global Positioning System) or GALILEO (Global Navigation Satellite System) module. The remote server in turn, compares received data with its database on designated parking places and on authorized people to use it and provides the permit unit 10 with approval or disapproval signal. Once approval is given, the system will trigger the plurality of light sources to emit light and the state of unit 10 will be 'on', and if there is a disapproval signal, the plurality of light sources remains un-triggered and the state will be 'off'. In this manner, once a parking officer or a policeman inspects a vehicle, he can easily identify whether an authorized person is displaying the parking permit or not.

According to an embodiment of the invention, each electronic parking permit tag has an electronic authentication address for local or remote recognition. The inspection of authorities on the tag can be done by a person on the ground, such as a parking officer, by aerial means via satellites, on the tag software (which is highly secured against intrusion and copying) and by electronic ID. For example, the parking permit unit 10 may be programmed to periodically transmit secured ID data (for example, the name of the disabled person and his authorization number) to its close vicinity. The transmitted ID data may then be received and verified by the parking officer. High security is also possible due to the fact the all the data and software required for the operation of the parking permit unit 10 are burned into its inherent memory and cannot be re-programmed. In addition, the municipal parking authorities will be able to read and decode the transmitted secured data, for further verification and authentication, as long as the parking permit unit is active.

According to another embodiment, the data in the parking permit unit 10 may also be used for identifying drivers that parked particular vehicles in particular places. This feature may be important for improving security, when desired. Also, the personal details of drivers that activated the parking permit unit 10 may also be used for controlling authorized persons. The municipal authorities may be allowed to program user specific permits that can be stored in the parking permit unit 10, such as specific

parking home and office addresses or addresses of shopping locations for a specific user.

According to a further embodiment, the data in the parking permit unit 10 may also be used for controlling the identity of one or more authorized persons that escort a
5 disabled person. These authorized persons may be for example, his close relatives who drive the vehicle for him, or a caregiver (in case of a person that cannot activate the parking permit unit, for example). In this case, the biometric data of these authorized persons will be stored in the parking permit unit 10, as well. This way, a
10 situation when other friends of the disabled person will use the parking permit unit 10 will be avoided.

The above features of the parking permit unit 10 allow using it legally, independent of the identity of the vehicle in which it is activated. In fact, any vehicle that is used to transport the disabled person can use it in a legal and controlled manner. For example,
15 even if a taxi is used for transportation, its parking permission is induced on the same taxi. This independency may also be advantageous when leased or rented cars are used by the disabled person.

The system proposed by the present invention discloses a solution to the problem of preventing the abuse and forging of handicap parking permits for vehicles and avoiding
20 frauds. The tag proposed by the present invention is not location based and does not require extensive data communication with remote computers. In order to achieve its goal, the tag proposed by the present invention requires only simple and basic short-range communication for transmitting a verification string (with a parking officer), free of charge. In addition, the tag proposed by the present invention has injective
25 identification capability, since it uses true biometric data of the handicapped person who owns the tag, so as to verify that he is present when the vehicle is parking. The tag proposed by the present invention is directed to the handicapped person and not to the vehicle that the handicapped person is using. This way, a handicapped person who took a taxi (or any other vehicle) to his destination may activate the tag in order to
30 permit the taxi to become a vehicle which is authorized to park in a parking spot that is preserved for handicapped only, as long as the handicapped person is present in the parking process. This tag is actually a stand alone compact and portable device, which can be easily moved between different vehicles that are used to serve a particular
handicapped person.

While one embodiment of the invention have been described by way of illustration, it
35 will be apparent that the invention can be carried into practice with many modifications,

5 variations and adaptations, and with the use of numerous equivalents or alternative solutions that are within the scope of persons skilled in the art (such as assured identification of vehicles that move from a specific restricted area to another restricted area), without departing from the spirit of the invention or exceeding the scope of the claims.

10 In the claims that follow and in the preceding description of the invention, except where the context requires otherwise owing to express language or necessary implication, the word “comprise” or variations such as “comprises” or “comprising” is used in an inclusive sense, that is, to specify the presence of the stated features but not to preclude the presence or addition of further features in various embodiments of the invention.

Further, any reference herein to prior art is not intended to imply that such prior art forms or formed a part of the common general knowledge in Australia or any other country.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A portable electronic parking permit tag for vehicles transporting disabled persons and for preventing forgery and abuse of use, comprising:
- a) casing placeable in a vehicle so that a universal disabled person symbol and parking authorization provided with said casing are visible from around the vehicle;
 - b) a memory module for storing data regarding the person or persons allowed to activate said tag including name and authorization number, in which all of said stored data is burned into said memory module to prevent forgery and includes biometric information of each of the said person or persons;
 - c) a biometric identification module for obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate said tag;
 - d) at least one display unit for indicating the status of said tag, whether activated or deactivated;
 - e) a processing unit for comparing said obtained biometric data with said stored data and for triggering the tag status to an activated status if said obtained biometric data and said stored data match;
 - f) a movement detector for deactivating said tag upon sensing movement of said tag, after being activated, to prevent unlawful usage of said tag;
 - g) a short-range transmitter for periodically transmitting secured data related to the name and authorization number of the disabled person who activated said tag, wherein said short-range transmitted data is receivable in an unmediated way by a mobile communication device carried by a parking officer and is locally verifiable by said mobile communication device to provide parking authorization of said tag; and
 - h) a power source for powering said tag.
2. A tag according to claim 1, in which some or all of the data is coded.
3. A tag according to claim 1, in which the stored data in the memory module further includes personal details and parking permission for each person allowed to activate the tag.

4. A tag according to claim 1, in which the power source for powering said tag is an independent battery, a rechargeable battery, a plug through which power is received from an external power source, or any combination thereof.
- 5 5. A tag according to claim 4, in which the external power source is the battery of the vehicle.
6. A tag according to claim 1, in which the memory module is a flash memory.
- 10 7. A tag according to claim 1, in which the at least one display unit displays information regarding the person who activated said tag and the corresponding parking authorization.
- 15 8. A tag according to claim 7, in which the information is displayed electronically according to the data stored in the memory module.
9. A tag according to claim 1, in which the universal disabled person symbol is printed or scribed on a faceplate of said tag.
- 20 10. A tag according to claim 1, which is an RF identification tag.
11. A parking permit method for preventing forging and abuse of a parking tag, comprising:
 - 25 a) storing data regarding the person or persons allowed to activate said tag and that is independent of the vehicle identification, in a memory module embedded within said parking tag including name and authorization number, wherein all of said stored data is burned into said memory module to prevent forgery and includes biometric information of each of said person or persons; said tag is placeable in the vehicle so that a
30 universal disabled person symbol and parking authorization provided on said to are visible from around the vehicle;
 - b) obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate said tag via a biometric identification module in said parking tag;
 - c) comparing said obtained biometric data with said stored data;

- d) triggering a tag status to an activated status in said parking tag if said obtained biometric data and said stored data match, wherein said tag is operated via a power source;
 - e) periodically transmitting by said parking tag secured short-range data related to the name and authorization number of the person or persons allowed to activate said tag;
 - f) displaying the status of said tag, whether activated or deactivated;
 - g) receiving in an unmediated way said short-range transmitted data by a mobile communication device of a parking officer and locally verifying parking authorization of said tag; and
 - h) deactivating said tag upon sensing movement of said tag after being activated indicative of completion of a parking session, to prevent unlawful usage of said tag.
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12. A method according to claim 11, wherein the stored data in the memory module further includes personal details and parking permission for each person allowed to activate said tag.
13. A method according to claim 11, wherein the tag is deactivated by a movement detector.
14. A method according to claim 11, wherein the power source is an independent battery, rechargeable battery, a plug through which power is received from an external power source, or any combination thereof.
15. A method according to claim 14, wherein the external power source is a battery of the vehicle.
16. A method according to claim 11, wherein the memory module is a flash memory.
17. A method according to claim 11, further comprising displaying information regarding the person who activated said tag and the corresponding parking authorization.

18. A method according to claim 17, wherein the information is displayed electronically according to the data stored in the memory module.
- 5 19. A method according to claim 17, wherein the information is printed or scribed on a faceplate of said tag.
20. A method according to claim 11, further comprising allowing communicating via an RF identification tag.
- 10 21. A system for verifying authorization to park a vehicle at a space designated for disabled persons, comprising:
- 15 a) a portable electronic parking permit tag for the vehicle transporting disabled persons and for preventing forgery and abuse of use, comprising:
- 16 i) a casing placeable in the vehicle so that a universal disabled person symbol and a parking authorization provided with said casing are visible from around the vehicle;
- 17 ii) a memory module for storing data regarding the person or persons allowed to activate said tag including name and authorization number, in which all of said stored data is burned into said memory module to prevent forgery and includes personal biometric information of each of said person or persons;
- 20 iii) a biometric identification module for obtaining biometric data of the person trying to activate said tag;
- 25 iv) at least one display unit for indicating the status of said tag, whether activated or deactivated;
- v) a processing unit for comparing said obtained biometric data with said stored data and for triggering the tag status to an activated status if said obtained biometric data and said stored data match;
- 30 vi) a movement detector for deactivating said tag upon sensing movement of said tag, after being activated, to prevent unlawful usage of said tag;
- vii) a short-range transmitter for periodically transmitting secured data related to the name and authorization number of the disabled person who activated said tag; and
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- viii) a power source for powering said tag; and
 - b) a mobile communication device carried by a parking officer, said mobile communication device being configured to verify parking authorization of said tag and comprising a memory device in which is stored a local database of parking authorized disable people, wherein said short-range transmitted data is receivable and locally verifiable in an unmediated way by said mobile communication device.

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- 22. A system according to claim 21, wherein the at least one display unit comprises a plurality of light sources each of which is illuminated to a different color in accordance with the activation status of the tag.

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- 23. A tag according to claim 1, wherein the at least one display unit comprises a plurality of light sources each of which is illuminated to a different color in accordance with the activation status of the tag.

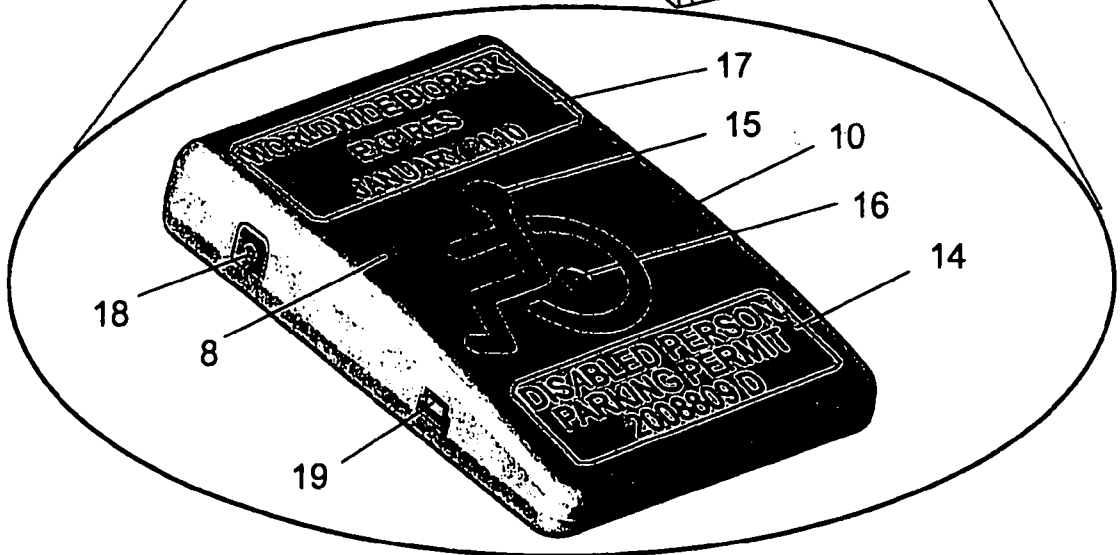
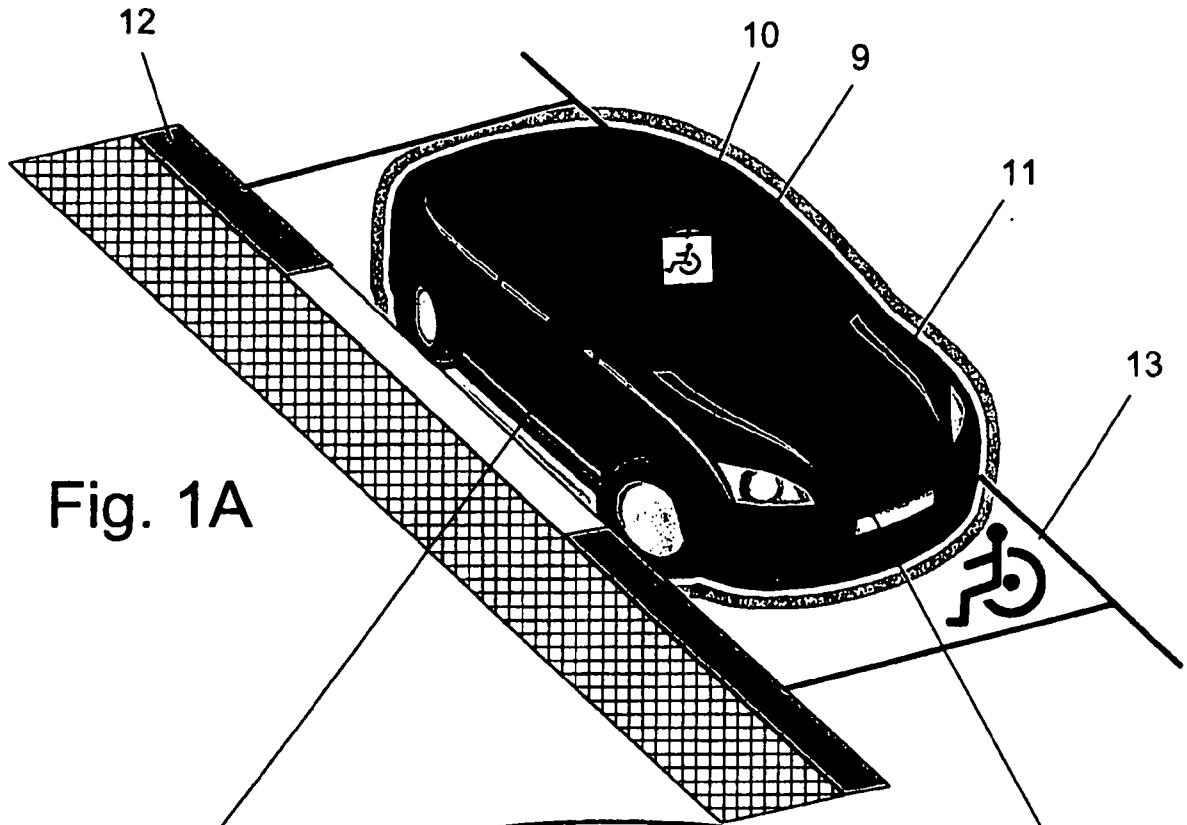
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- 24. A tag according to claim 1, wherein the movement detector is also operable to cause the tag to become deactivated upon sensing continuous movement of the vehicle for more than a predetermined period of time.

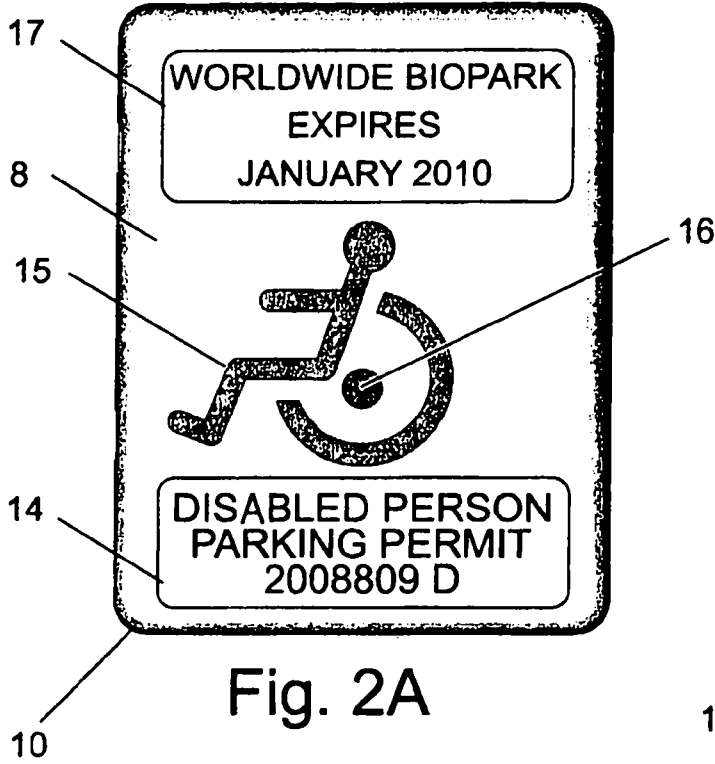
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- 25. A method according to claim 11, wherein the tag is also deactivated upon sensing continuous movement of the vehicle for more than a predetermined period of time.

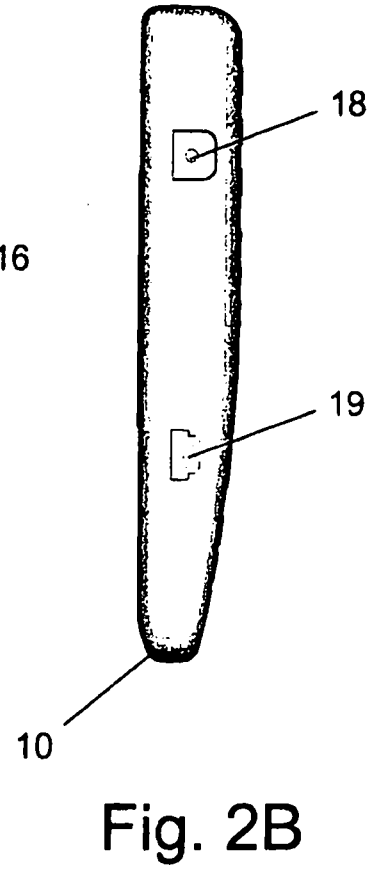
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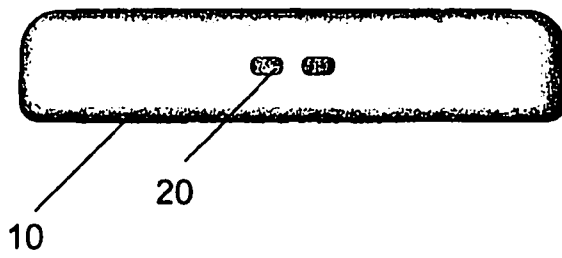
Front view



Side view



Top view



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Rear view

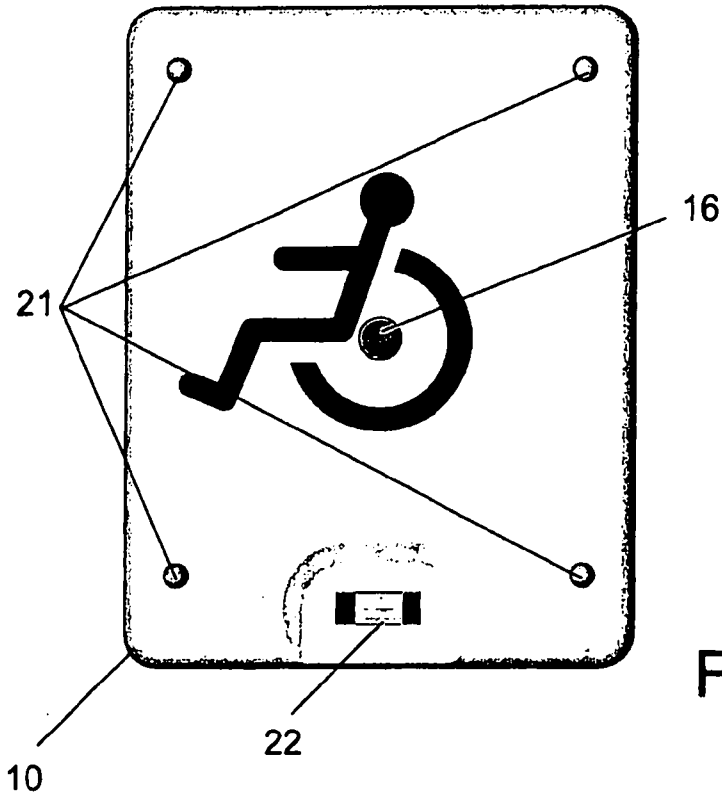


Fig. 2D

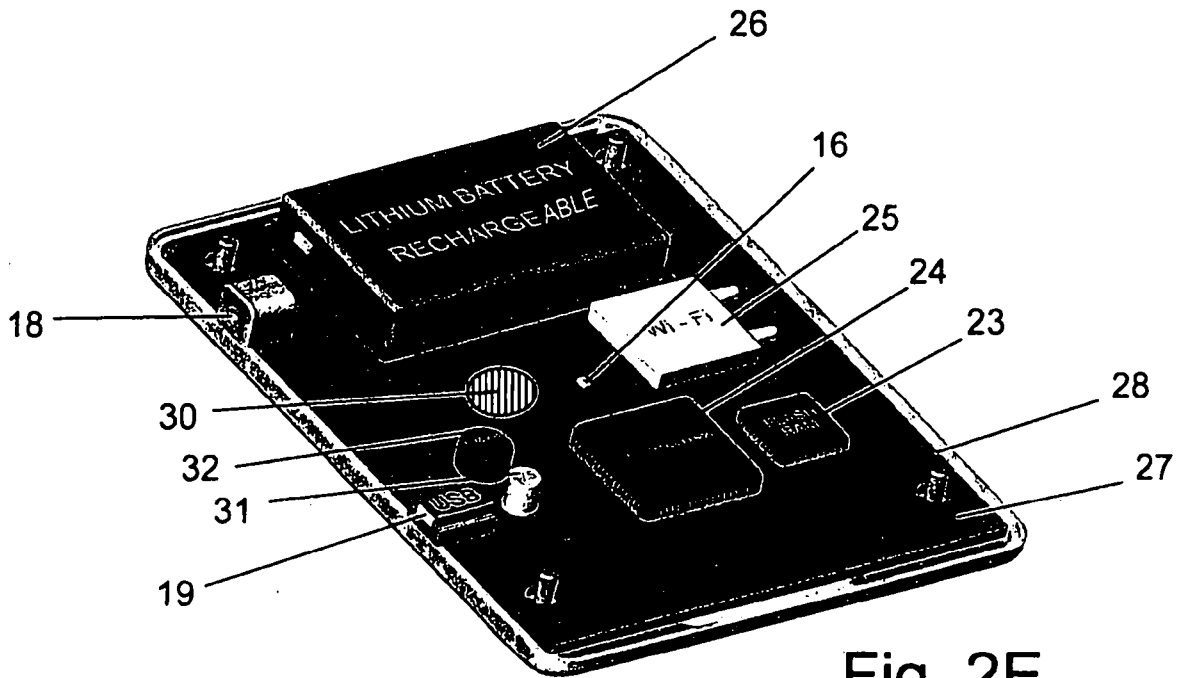


Fig. 2E



Fig. 2F