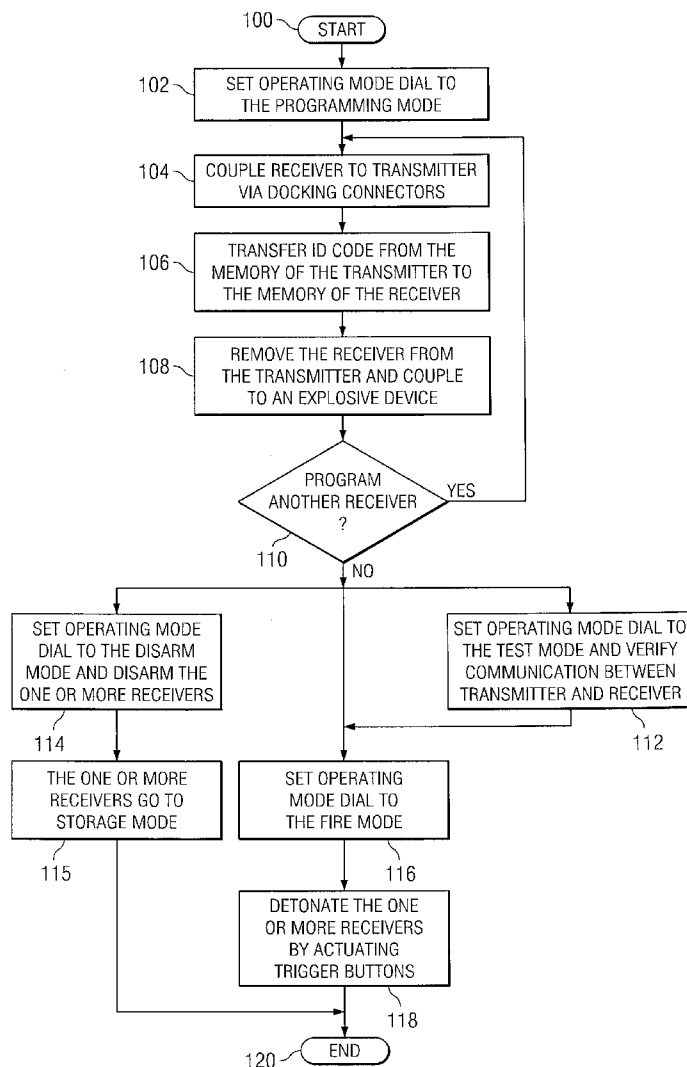




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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Plummer et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2011/0174181 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jul. 21, 2011**(54) **REMOTE EXPLOSION DETONATION
SYSTEM****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.****F42B 3/10** (2006.01)**F42D 1/045** (2006.01)**F42D 1/05** (2006.01)**F42C 11/00** (2006.01)**F42C 21/00** (2006.01)(76) Inventors: **Brady A. Plummer**, Fishers, IN
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(US)(52) **U.S. Cl. 102/202.7; 102/206**(57) **ABSTRACT**(21) Appl. No.: **12/267,441**(22) Filed: **Nov. 7, 2008****Related U.S. Application Data**(60) Provisional application No. 61/002,476, filed on Nov.
9, 2007.

According to one embodiment of the disclosure, a remote explosive detonation system includes a transmitter and at least one receiver having a detonator. The transmitter transmits an electro-magnetic signal having a transmitter identification code that may be received by the receiver. The receiver initiates the detonator if the transmitter identification code matches an internal identification code stored in the receiver.



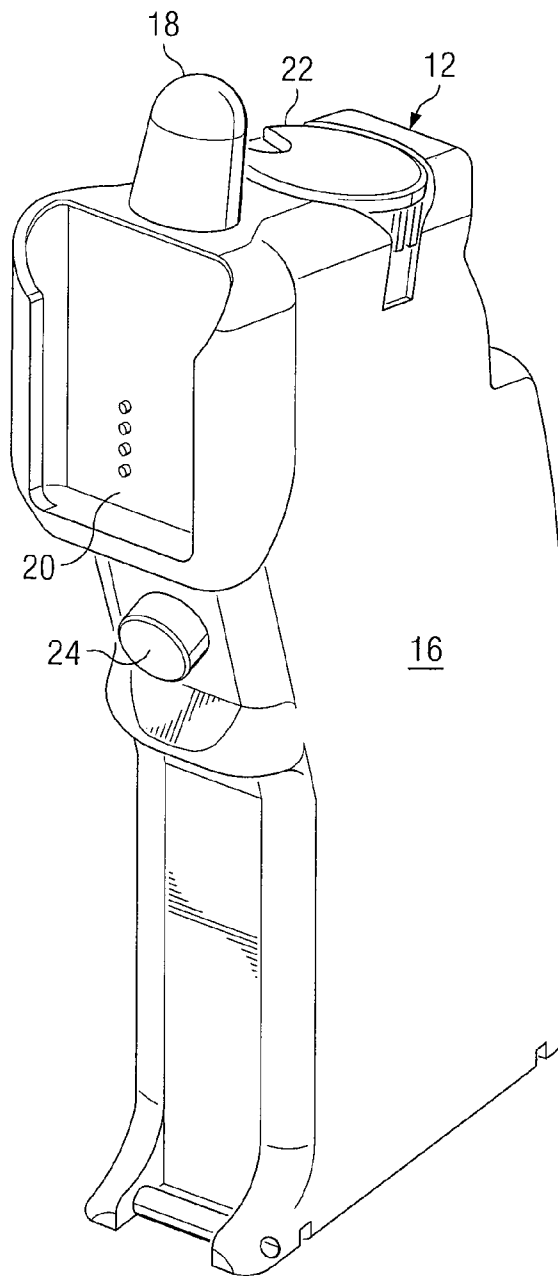


FIG. 1A

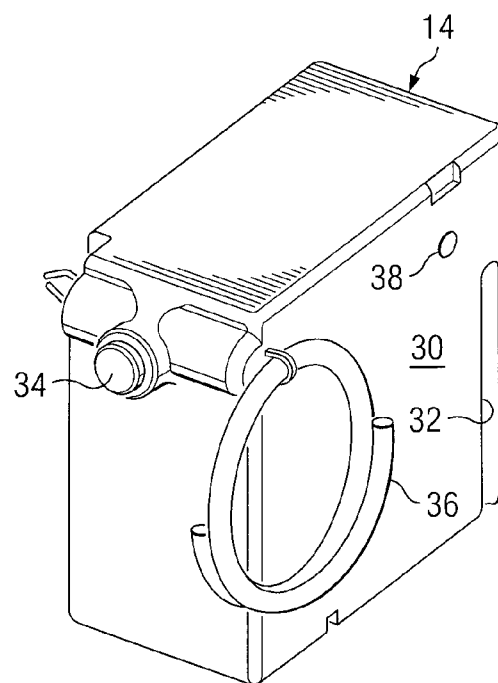


FIG. 2A

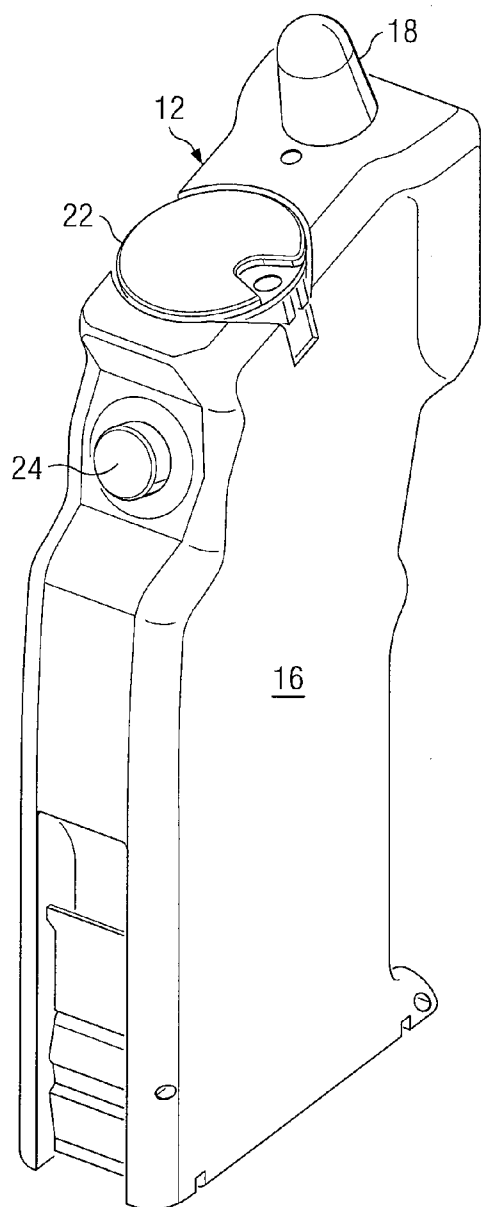


FIG. 1B

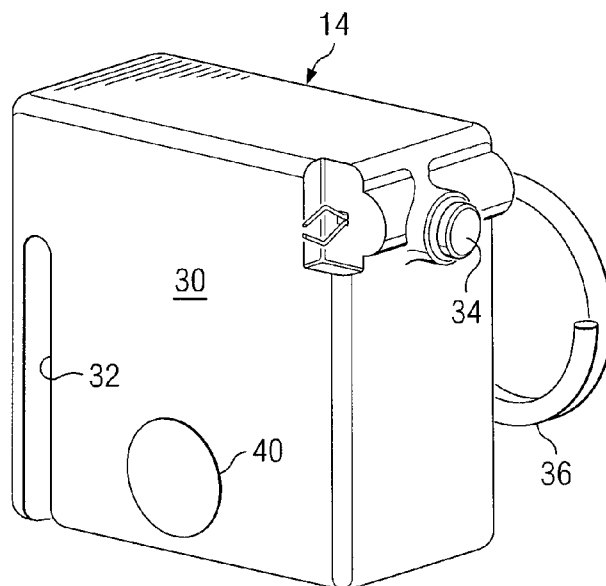


FIG. 2B

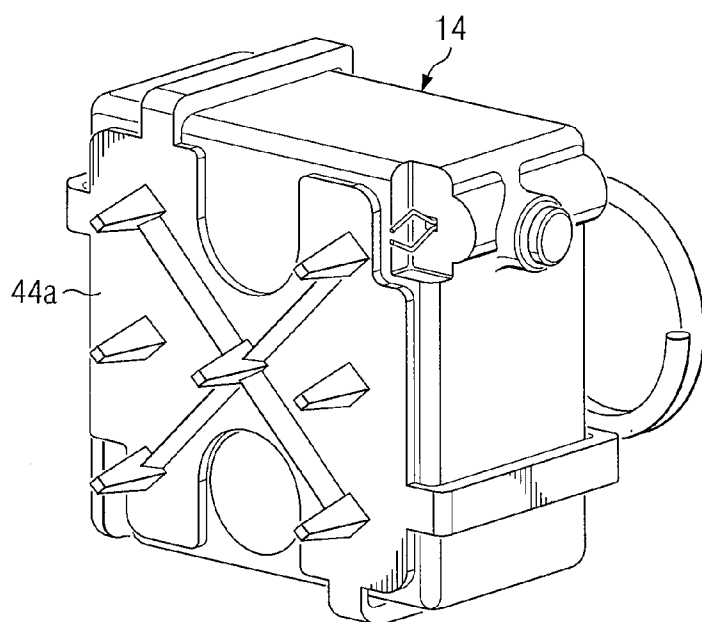


FIG. 3A

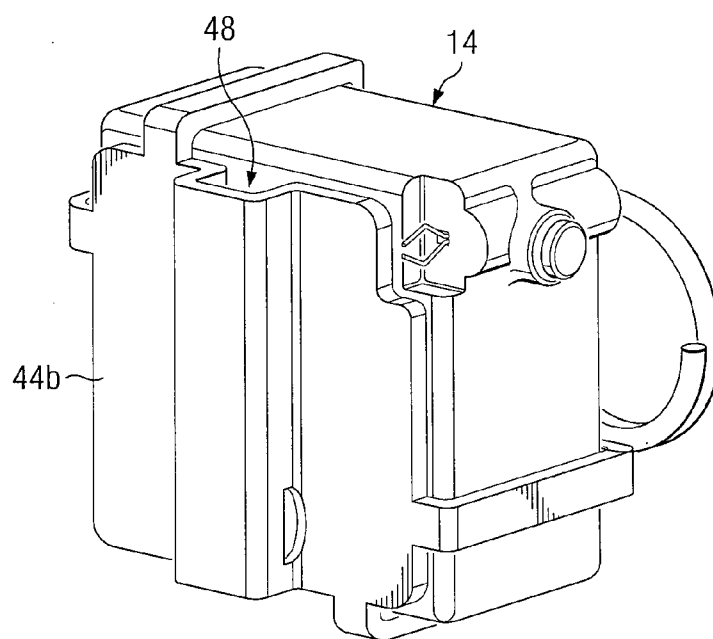


FIG. 3B

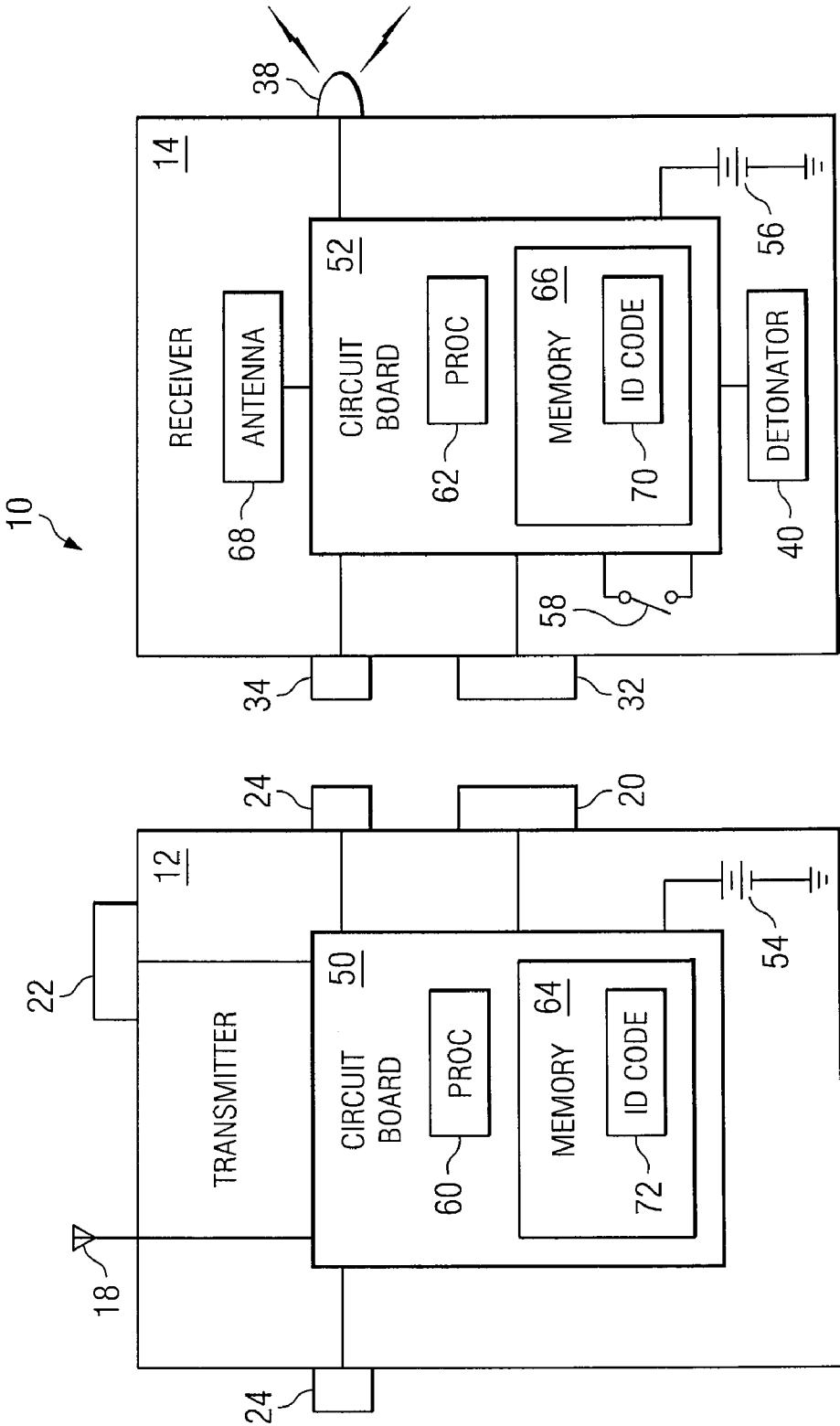


FIG. 4

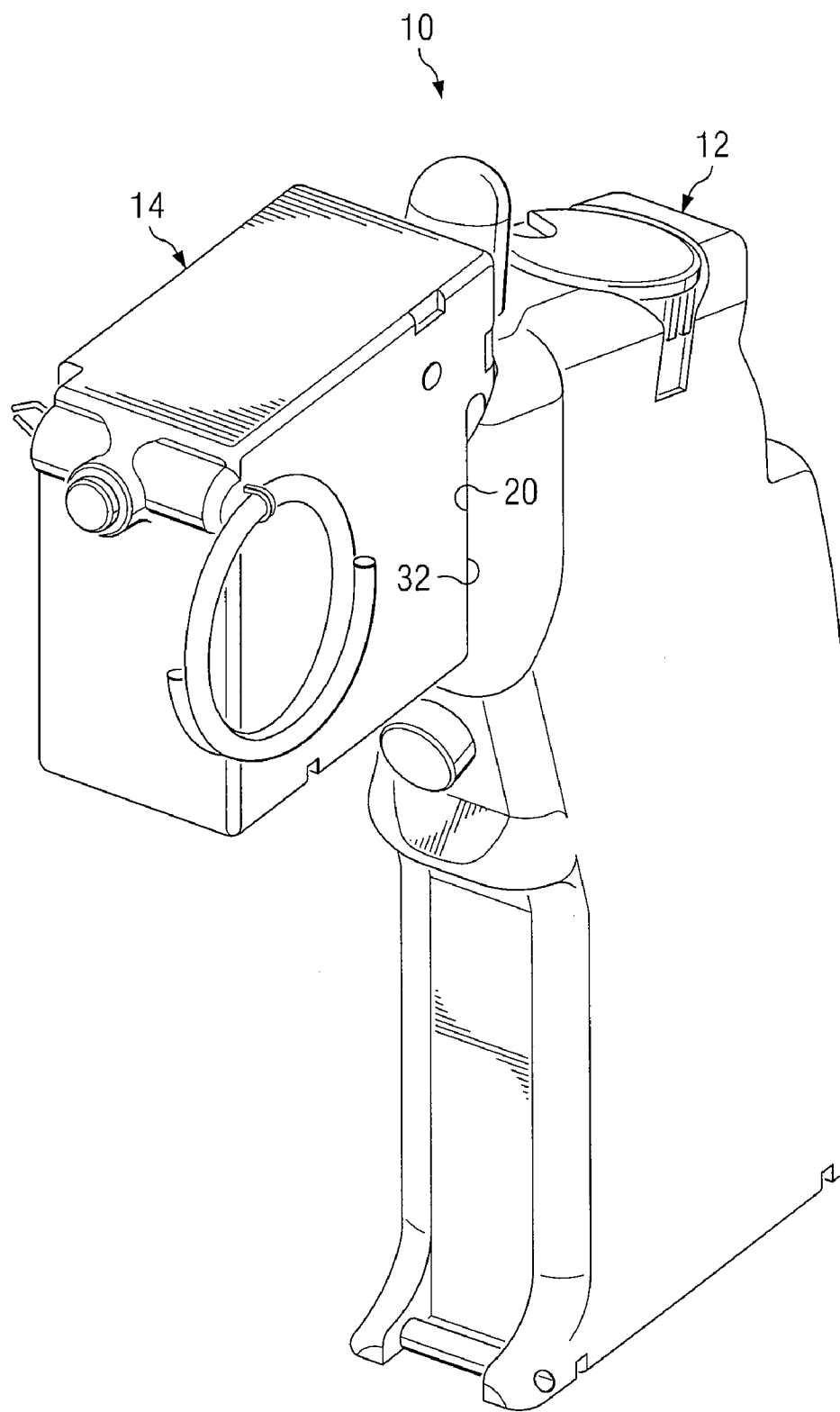


FIG. 5

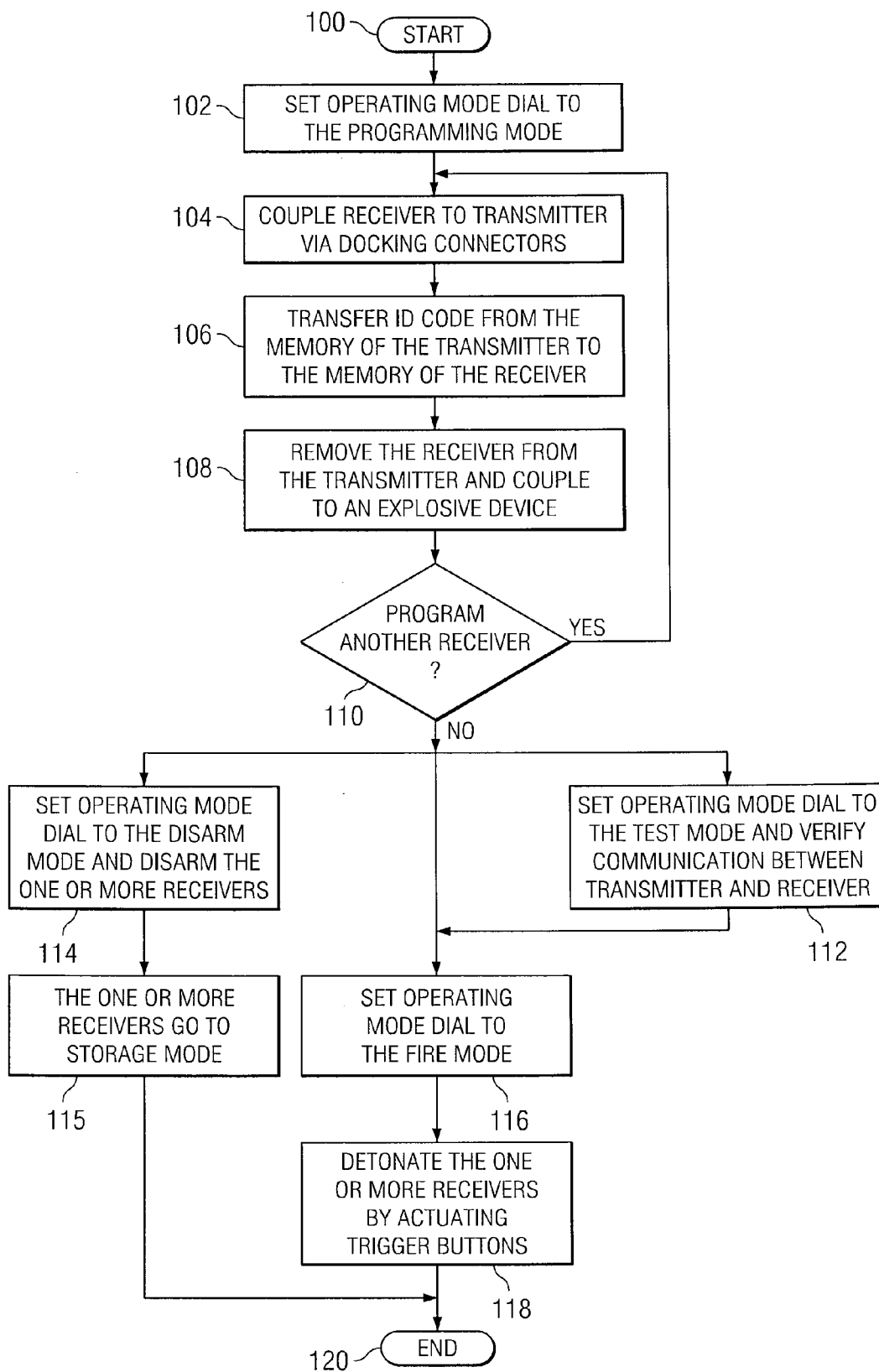


FIG. 6

REMOTE EXPLOSION DETONATION SYSTEM

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/002,476, entitled "REMOTE DETONATION SYSTEM," which was filed on Nov. 9, 2007.

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0002] This disclosure generally relates to explosives, and more particularly, to a remote explosive detonation system for explosives and a method of operating the same.

BACKGROUND OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0003] Explosives used in military combat may be initiated by detonation devices. Due to the destructive nature of explosives, these detonation devices may incorporate various safety features to avoid premature detonation. For example, a shock tube is a type of detonation device that transmits a detonation signal to a remotely located explosive using a pressure signal. The shock tube may be made of non-conductive materials, which are not generally susceptible to premature detonation caused by stray electro-magnetic radiation.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0004] According to one embodiment of the disclosure, a remote explosive detonation system includes a transmitter and at least one receiver configured with a detonator. The transmitter transmits an electro-magnetic signal with a transmitter identification code that may be received by the receiver. The receiver initiates the detonator if the transmitter identification code matches an internal identification code stored in the receiver.

[0005] Some embodiments of the disclosure may provide numerous technical advantages. For example, one embodiment of the remote explosive detonation system may provide a relatively reliable approach for remotely detonating explosives that reduces detection of the source of the detonation. Known detonation systems use elongated shock tubes that convey a detonation signal using an impulse blast of pressurized air. These shock tubes, however, often leave a residual trail indicating the source of the explosive blast, which may compromise the security of personnel using the explosives. The remote explosive detonation system of the present disclosure uses a wireless signal that may be substantially difficult to trace following detonation, thus alleviating security issues associated with enemy response following use of remotely configured explosives. The remote explosive detonation system may be relatively quicker to implement than known detonation systems that require spooling shock tube from the explosive to its initiation point. Additionally, the location of the initiation point may be concealed more effectively than known explosive detonation systems using shock tubes that may leave a residual trail of shock tube material following detonation of the explosive.

[0006] Other technical advantages will be readily apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art from the following figures, descriptions, and claims. Moreover, while specific advantages have been enumerated above, various embodiments may include all, some, or none of the enumerated advantages.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] A more complete understanding of embodiments of the disclosure will be apparent from the detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

[0008] FIGS. 1A and 1B are front perspective and rear perspective views, respectively, of one embodiment of a transmitter of the remote explosive detonation system according to the teachings of the present disclosure;

[0009] FIGS. 2A and 2B are front perspective and rear perspective views, respectively, of one embodiment of a receiver that may be used with the transmitter of FIGS. 1A and 1B;

[0010] FIG. 3A is a perspective view of one embodiment of a claw accessory clip that may be configured on the receiver of FIGS. 2A and 2B;

[0011] FIG. 3B is a perspective view of one embodiment of a shock tube accessory clip that may be configured on the receiver of FIGS. 2A and 2B;

[0012] FIG. 4 is a diagram view of remote explosive detonation system showing several elements of the transmitter and the receiver;

[0013] FIG. 5 is a perspective view showing the receiver of FIGS. 2A and 2B docked on the transmitter of FIGS. 1A and 1B; and

[0014] FIG. 6 is a flowchart showing a series of actions that may be performed by the remote explosive detonation system to remotely detonate an explosive.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

[0015] A shock tube is a detonation device that may be used to detonate an explosive, such as cyclotrimethylene trinitramine (C4). These shock tubes, however, may have drawbacks. For example, following detonation of the explosive, a shock tube may leave a residual trail indicating the location of the triggering device.

[0016] FIGS. 1A through 2B show one embodiment of a remote explosive detonation system 10. Remote explosive detonation system 10 generally includes a transmitter 12 and at least one receiver 14. The transmitter 12 transmits an electro-magnetic signal that may be received by receiver 14 to detonate an explosive (not shown). As will be described in detail below, the transmitted electro-magnetic signal may include an identification code that may be used by the receiver 14 to ensure validity of the transmitted signal. Thus in some embodiments, remote explosive detonation system 10 may provide relatively secure remote explosive detonation of explosives without creating a residual trail as typically produced by shock tubes.

[0017] Transmitter 12 comprises a handheld transmitter housing 16 that is configured with an antenna 18, transmitter docking connector 20, an operating mode dial 22, and one or more trigger buttons 24. Transmitter housing 16 has a shape suitable for handling by the hand of a user. Transmitter 12 may have multiple independently operated actuation mechanisms that are simultaneously actuated for detonating the explosive. In this manner, the possibility of inadvertent detonation of the explosive may be reduced. In the particular embodiment shown, two trigger buttons 24 are implemented.

Other embodiments may include any suitable type and quantity of actuation mechanisms, such as two or more levers, or one button and one lever.

[0018] Receiver 14 comprises a receiver housing 30 that is configured with a receiver docking connector 32, an arming button 34, an arming/safety pin 36, an indicator light 38, and a detonator 40. Receiver docking connector is engageable with transmitter docking connector 20. In the particular embodiment shown, receiver housing 30 has outer dimensions of approximately 2.0 inches by 2.0 inches by 1.0 inches. In other embodiments, receiver housing 30 may have any suitable size.

[0019] Arming/safety pin 36 is removable from receiver housing 30. Detonation is prevented when arming/safety pin 36 is engaged in receiver housing 30. Once arming/safety pin 36 is removed, receiver 14 may be armed and ready to initiate detonation upon a valid signal from the transmitter 12. Arming button 34 may be spring loaded such that removal of the arming/safety pin 36 allows the arming button 34 to project outwardly from the receiver housing 30. The indicator light 38 may be any suitable source of light, such as a light emitting diode (LED) and may provide visual indication of the armed status of the receiver 14. In one embodiment, the indicator light 38 emits only infrared light. In this manner, indicator light 38 may be visible only through night vision goggles.

[0020] Detonator 40 is configured to explode upon receipt of a valid signal from transmitter 12. In one embodiment, detonator 40 includes only secondary explosive materials. That is, detonator 40 may be relatively free of any primary explosive material that may be susceptible to premature detonation. In one embodiment, detonator 40 is an exploding foil initiator (EFI), such as a low energy exploding foil initiator (LEEFI), that may be initiated by an electrical pulse of energy.

[0021] FIGS. 3A and 3B show two differing types of accessory clips 44a and 44b that may be configured on receiver housing 30. Accessory clip 44a is a claw accessory clip having multiple claw-like protrusions 46 that may be impaled in explosives having a clay-like consistency, such as C4 explosive material. Accessory clip 44b is a shock tube accessory clip having an elongated cavity 48 for placement of a section of shock tube inside. Another embodiment of an accessory clip (not shown) may include a detonation cord accessory clip that provides coupling of the receiver 14 to a detonation cord.

[0022] FIG. 4 is a diagram view of remote explosive detonation system 10 showing several elements of transmitter 12 and receiver 14. Transmitter 12 and receiver 14 each include a circuit board 50 and 52 that is powered by a battery 54 and 56. Circuit board 50 of transmitter 12 is coupled to trigger buttons 24, operating mode dial 22, transmitter docking connector 20, and antenna 18. Circuit board 52 of receiver 14 is coupled to an arming/safety pin switch 58, receiver docking connector 32, arming button 34, indicator light 38, and detonator 40, and an antenna 68. In the particular embodiment shown, circuit boards 50 and 52 each include a processor 60 and 62 that executes instructions stored in a memory 64 and 66. In other embodiments, circuit boards 50 and 52 may include any suitable form of logic for executing the various features of transmitter 12 and receiver 14, respectively.

[0023] Transmitter 12 may include any suitable electrical circuit for generating a signal that is transmitted through antenna 18. In one embodiment, transmitter 12 uses a spread spectrum signal transmission technique to transmit the signal, which may yield a low probability of intercept (LPI), a low probability of jamming (LPJ), and/or a low probability of spoofing (LPS). The spread spectrum signal transmission technique is a frequency hopping process in which the trans-

mitted signal may be alternatively transmitted over differing frequencies. Because the transmitted electro-magnetic energy is spread over a relatively wide frequency range, the signal may be relatively difficult to jam, spoof, or intercept. In another embodiment, the frequency hopping process used to generate the spread spectrum signal may be proprietary to reduce unwanted reception of the transmitted signal from others. In another embodiment, the transmitter 12 and receiver 14 may use forward error correction (FEC) techniques to further reduce susceptibility to unwanted electro-magnetic radiation. In another embodiment, information may be transferred from transmitter 12 to receiver 14 using data packets. These data packets may be deciphered by receiver according to a preamble and/or a post-amble of the received data packet to verify proper receipt of signals from transmitter 12. In another embodiment, receiver 14 may perform a hash function, such as a cyclic redundancy check (CRC) to verify proper receipt of signals from transmitter 12. In another embodiment, transmitter 12 may transmit commands to receiver 14 using specific command words, such as logical words having greater than 65,000 combinations to reduce the possibility of misinterpretation of commands by receiver 14.

[0024] The transmitter 12/receiver 14 combination may have any suitable range that provides a relatively safe distance of transmitter 12 from receiver 14 when explosive is detonated. In a particular embodiment, an effective transmission range of greater than approximately 50 meters may provide sufficient protection from shrapnel or other debris caused by the detonation of explosives commonly used with remote explosive detonation system 10.

[0025] Receiver 14 may include any suitable electrical circuit for receiving and processing the transmitted signal from transmitter 12. Receiver 14 includes an antenna 68 that may be disposed within receiver housing for receiving the transmitted signal. In one embodiment, antenna 68 is a patch antenna. According to the teachings of the present disclosure, memory 66 of receiver 14 stores a receiver identification code 70 that may be compared with a transmitter identification code 72 that is modulated onto the signal transmitted by transmitter 12. Only when transmitter identification code 72 matches receiver identification code 70 is detonation of detonator 40 allowed.

[0026] FIG. 5 shows the receiver 14 docked on the transmitter 12 by coupling the transmitter docking connector 20 with the receiver docking connector 32. When receiver docking connector is coupled to transmitter docking connector 20, receiver 14 may be programmed with the identification code from the transmitter 12. In one embodiment, multiple receivers 14 may be programmed to detonate simultaneously in response to a single signal from transmitter 12. To detonate multiple receivers 14 simultaneously, each of the multiple receivers 14 may be programmed to respond to transmitter 12 by sequentially docking each receiver 14 with transmitter 12.

[0027] Modifications, additions, or omissions may be made to remote explosive detonation system 10 without departing from the scope of the disclosure. The components of remote explosive detonation system 10 may be integrated or separated. For example, The transmitter 12 may be implemented as a stand-alone device or may form a portion of another larger system. Moreover, the operations of remote explosive detonation system 10 may be performed by more, fewer, or other components. For example, the operations of transmitter 12 may generate an electro-magnetic signal that is relayed through a wireless repeater, such that receiver 14 receives the transmitted electro-magnetic signal from the wireless repeater. Additionally, operations of remote explosive detonation system 10 may be performed using any suitable logic

comprising software, hardware, and/or other logic. As used in this document, “each” refers to each member of a set or each member of a subset of a set.

[0028] FIG. 6 shows one embodiment of a series of actions that may be performed to program and use remote explosive detonation system 10. In act 100, the process is initiated.

[0029] In act 102, operating mode dial 22 is set to the programming mode. When the programming mode is selected, actuation of any receivers 14 may be inhibited. In this manner, premature detonation may be reduced.

[0030] In act 104, Receiver 14 is docked to transmitter 12 by coupling receiver docking connector 32 to transmitter docking connector 20. In one embodiment, receiver 14 includes an indicator light 38 that indicates its operating condition. For example, indicator light 38 may become illuminated when receiver 14 is docked on transmitter 12 to indicate that its circuit 52 is in an operational state and the battery is supplying ample electrical power for its operation.

[0031] In act 106, identification code 72 stored in memory 64 of transmitter 12 is transferred to the memory 66 of receiver 14. In one embodiment, commencement of identification code transfer is provided by actuation of trigger buttons 24. In other embodiments, transfer of transmitter identification code 72 commences when receiver docking connector 32 is coupled to transmitter docking connector 20. In one embodiment, indicator light may generate a blinking pattern indicating proper receipt and storage of identification code 70 in its internal memory 66. In another embodiment, the blinking pattern may be indicative of the status of the receiver's battery 56. For example, indicator light 38 may blink twice to indicate a fully charged battery while a three blink sequence may indicate a partially charged battery 56.

[0032] In act 108, receiver 14 is removed from transmitter 12 and coupled to a suitable explosive device. Receiver 14 may be coupled to various types of explosive devices using one of several accessory clips 44 that may be mounted on receiver 14. In one embodiment, receiver 14 may incorporate a delay activation mechanism that inhibits detonation for a period of time following removal from transmitter 12. In one embodiment, this delay time may be approximately 4 seconds.

[0033] In act 110, if more than one receiver 14 is to be detonated simultaneously, acts 102 through 108 may be repeated with another receiver 14. If only one receiver 14 is to be detonated, however, processing continues at act 112.

[0034] In act 112, operating mode dial 22 may be moved from the programming mode to a test mode. While operating mode dial 22 is in the test mode and the one or more receivers 14 are electrically decoupled from transmitter 12, actuation of trigger buttons 24 causes indicator light 38 to generate a visual indication that its associated receiver 14 has properly received and its stored identification code 70 matches that of the transmitter identification code in the transmission signal. While in the test mode of operation, detonator 40 is inhibited from detonation. Thus, receivers 14 may be verified for proper operation with transmitter 12 following removal from transmitter docking connector 20.

[0035] In act 114, operating mode dial 22 may be moved to the disarm mode. While in the disarm mode of operation, actuation of trigger buttons 24 causes one or all of the one or more receivers 14 to be disarmed. In one embodiment, disarming of receivers 14 may be accomplished by erasing its stored internal identification code 70. In this manner, receipt of an ensuing transmission signal including an identification code will not cause the receiver 14 to detonate the detonator 40.

[0036] In act 115, the one or more receivers 14 go to a storage mode. In the storage mode, the one or more receivers 14 may not detonate from detonation signals transmitted by transmitter 12, but may be programmed by transmitter 12 in the future according to acts 102, through 108.

[0037] In act 116, operating mode dial 22 is moved from the programming mode to the operation mode. In the operation mode, the trigger buttons 24 are no longer inhibited from generating a signal that may be used to detonate each of the receivers 14 programmed in acts 102 through 108.

[0038] In act 118, the one or more receiver 14 is detonated by transmitter 12 by actuating trigger buttons 24. At this point, remote explosive detonation system 10 has remotely detonated an explosive and the process ends in act 120.

[0039] Remote explosive detonation system 10 may have multiple safety mechanisms that reduce premature detonation. For example, the signal transmitted by transmitter 12 may include a spread spectrum transmission, forward error correction, layered coding, and/or error detection techniques to reduce interception or jamming by others. Additionally, detonator 40 may be void of any primary explosive material that is generally prone to premature detonation. Thus, remote explosive detonation system 10 may provide a relatively secure method for detonating one or more explosive devices from a distance using radio frequency transmission techniques in a relatively reliable manner.

[0040] Although the present disclosure and its advantages have been described in detail, it should be understood that various changes, substitutions, and alterations can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the disclosure as defined by the appended claims.

1. A remote explosive detonation system comprising:

a transmitter comprising a transmitter docking connector and operable to transmit an electro-magnetic signal using a spread spectrum transmission technique, the electro-magnetic signal comprising a transmitter identification code; and

a plurality of receivers that each comprises a receiver docking connector and a receiver housing that houses a detonator and a patch antenna operable to receive the electro-magnetic signal, each of the plurality of receivers operable to:

electrically couple to the transmitter by coupling its receiver docking connector to the transmitter docking connector;
receive the transmitter identification code from the transmitter;
store the transmitted identification code as an internal identification code;
receive the electro-magnetic signal from the patch antenna; and
simultaneously detonate its respective detonator if the transmitted identification code matches the internal identification code.

2. A remote explosive detonation system comprising:

a transmitter having a transmitter docking connector and operable to transmit an electro-magnetic signal comprising a transmitter identification code; and

at least one receiver comprising a receiver docking connector and a receiver housing that houses a detonator, the at least one receiver operable to:

electrically couple to the transmitter by coupling its receiver docking connector to the transmitter docking connector;
receive the transmitter identification code from the transmitter; and

- store the transmitter identification code as the internal identification code;
 - electrically decouple from the transmitter;
 - receive the electro-magnetic signal from the transmitter;
 - and
 - detonate the detonator if the transmitter identification code matches an internal identification code stored in the receiver.
3. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, further comprising a plurality of accessory clips that are each alternatively coupled to the at least one receiver, the plurality of accessory clips operable to couple the at least one receiver to differing types of explosives.
4. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 3, wherein the plurality of accessory clips are selected from the group consisting of a claw accessory clip, a shock tube accessory clip, and a detonation cord accessory clip.
5. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the at least one receiver is a plurality of receivers, the transmitter operable to transmit the electro-magnetic signal simultaneously to each of the plurality of receivers.
6. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the at least one receiver comprises an arming/safety pin that is selectively removable from the at least one receiver, the at least one receiver being operable to allow detonation of the detonator in response to removal of the arming/safety pin.
7. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the detonator comprises an exploding foil initiator.
8. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, further comprising an indicator light configured on the at least one receiver, the indicator light operable to indicate an operational status of the at least one receiver.
9. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 8, wherein the indicator light is operable to emit a blinking pattern indicative of a status of a battery that powers the receiver.
10. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 8, wherein the indicator light is operable to emit only infrared light.
11. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the electro-magnetic signal comprises a spread spectrum electro-magnetic signal.
12. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, further comprising an antenna disposed within the receiver housing, the antenna operable to receive the electro-magnetic signal.
13. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 12, further comprising a patch antenna disposed within the receiver housing, the patch antenna operable to receive the electro-magnetic signal.
14. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the receiver is operable to, after storing the transmitter identification code, receive a disarm signal from the transmitter and erase the identification code stored in the receiver upon receipt of the disarm signal.
15. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the receiver is operable to receive a test mode signal from the transmitter and emit, using an indicator light configured on the at least one receiver, a visual indication to indicate receipt of the test mode signal from the transmitter, the test mode signal not operable to detonate the detonator.

16. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein the transmitter is housed in a hand-held housing.

17. The remote explosive detonation system of claim 2, wherein receiving the electro-magnetic signal from the transmitter comprises receiving the electro-magnetic signal comprising a data packet having a preamble and a post-amble, and comparing the transmitter identification code with the internal identification code if the preamble and the post-amble matches a specified sequence.

18. A method for detonating an explosive comprising:
 electrically coupling a receiver to a transmitter;
 copying a transmitter identification code from the transmitter to the receiver;
 storing the transmitter identification code as an internal identification code in the receiver;
 decoupling the receiver from the transmitter;
 receiving an electro-magnetic signal from the transmitter, the electro-magnetic signal comprising the transmitter identification code; and
 detonating a detonator housed in the receiver if the transmitter identification code matches a receiver identification code stored in a receiver, the detonator initiating the explosive.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein initiating the explosive comprises initiating the explosive that is coupled to the receiver using one of a plurality of accessory clips, the one accessory clip coupling the receiver to one of a plurality of differing types of explosives.

20. The method of claim 18, further comprising disabling detonation of the detonator while the receiver is electrically coupled to the transmitter.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein detonating the detonator is the receiver comprises simultaneously detonating a plurality of detonator in a corresponding plurality of receivers.

22. The method of claim 18, further comprising removing an arming/safety pin from the receiver to allow detonation of the detonator.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising disabling detonation of the detonator for a specified period of time after the arming/safety pin is removed from the transmitter.

24. The method of claim 18, wherein detonating the detonator comprises detonating the detonator comprising an exploding foil initiator.

25. The method of claim 18, further comprising, after storing the transmitter identification code, receiving a disarm signal from the transmitter and erasing the identification code stored in the receiver upon receipt of the disarm signal.

26. The method of claim 18, further comprising receiving a test mode signal from the transmitter, and emitting, using an indicator light configured on the at least one receiver, a visual indication to indicate receipt of the test mode signal from the transmitter, the test mode signal detonating the detonator.

27. The method of claim 18, wherein receiving the electro-magnetic signal from the transmitter comprises receiving the electro-magnetic signal comprising a data packet having a preamble and a post-amble, and comparing the transmitter identification code with the internal identification code if the preamble and the post-amble matches a specified sequence.

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