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(54) **DEVICE AND METHOD FOR DETECTING A HAND GRASP WITH A TWO-ZONE SENSOR IN THE STEERING WHEEL**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method of operating a capacitive sensing device that includes exactly two electrically conductive antenna electrodes, which are placeable in two layers at a vehicle steering wheel rim, and a current measurement circuit for determining complex electric currents in the antenna electrodes. The method includes at least the following steps for constituting a measurement cycle: operating each one of the exactly two antenna electrodes in loading mode and determine the complex impedance of the respective antenna electrode; and generating a classification signal that is indicative of a present scenario, based on a fulfillment of at least one predetermined condition concerning at least one characteristic quantity of the first complex impedance as well as of the second complex impedance.