July 21, 2000

Mr. M. Gocho
PATENT SERVICE CORPORATION
Baba Building, 3rd Floor
12-10, Takadanobaba 4-Chome
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 160
JAPAN

Re: Validity Search and Opinion
U.S. Patent No. 5,897,168
Your Reference: Infg.US.200(SF)

Dear Mr. Gocho:

Thank you for your letter of June 21, 2000. In accordance therewith, we have now completed a validity search[1]

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[1]No integrity checks were conducted during this search, and therefore the results of this search are dependent upon the accuracy and completeness of the PTO files at the time the search was conducted. While the field of search we searched is considered to be reasonable and covered the area in which the most relevant prior art is likely to be found based on the disclosure provided to us, because of idiosyncrasies in the PTO classification system there can be no assurance that better prior art does not exist.

regarding the above.

Briefly, the search was directed to a die cast magnesium (or magnesium alloy) seat back and seat cushion frame. The frame is cast in a single step, and is distinguished by top and bottom tie rods and sides of a Z (or L) shaped cross section.

During the course of our search, we discovered that you already possess the most relevant prior art relating to U.S. Patent No. 5,897,168. However, the following patents were also noted, copies of each of which are enclosed herewith.

Patent Number	**Inventor(s)**
2,941,289	Chace
5,382,083	Fecteau et al.
5,412,860	Miyauchi et al.
5,499,863	Nakane et al.
5,666,727	Rashid

U.S. Patent No. 5,412,860 to Miyauchi et al. discloses a back rest frame for a vehicular seat. The frame comprises a U-shaped upper section (10) with integrally connected side sections (30) having a generally prism-shaped hollow base portion (30A).

These side sections (30) and the upper section (20) of the frame are formed integrally as a one-piece structure by virute of being formed of the single frame material (50). An extended wall portion (31) extends from base portion 30A, and includes a side wall part 932) and a rear wall part (33) which correspond to rear and side wall portions (55a,b) or the frame material (50). Side and rear wall parts (32,33) are arranged in a generally L-shaped cross section once joined with the outer wall of the base portion (30A). A hollow elongate rigid member (40), such as a metallic pipe, connects the lower end portions of side section 30.

Fecteau et al., in U.S. Patent No. 5,382,083, propose a lightweight vehicle seat frame made of magnesium and having rear and front cross members (28,30). The front cross member (30) has a rearwardly extending flange (88) and raised return bent flange (90), and the rear cross member (28) has a forwardly extending flange (84) and raised return bent flange (86). Both of said flanges essentially form an L-shaped cross section.

The remaining patents are included as being of possible further interest.

The field of search included the following:

Class 29, subclass 897.2

Class 72, subclass 700

Class 297, subclasses 351, 452.12, 452.18, 452.19

We are enclosing herewith our debit note for services.

Sincerely,

Norman J. Latker

Enclosures
NJL:mak
f:\,P\pate\Miscellaneous\seat.srp.wpd