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The Director

of the United States Patent and Trademark Office has received an application for a patent for a new and useful invention. The title and description of the invention are enclosed. The requirements of law have been complied with, and it has been determined that a patent on the invention shall be granted under the law.

Therefore, this United States

Patent

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Katherine Kelly Vidal



DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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If the application for this patent was filed on or after December 12, 1980, maintenance fees are due three years and six months, seven years and six months, and eleven years and six months after the date of this grant, or within a grace period of six months thereafter upon payment of a surcharge as provided by law. The amount, number and timing of the maintenance fees required may be changed by law or regulation. Unless payment of the applicable maintenance fee is received in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on or before the date the fee is due or within a grace period of six months thereafter, the patent will expire as of the end of such grace period.

Patent Term Notice

If the application for this patent was filed on or after June 8, 1995, the term of this patent begins on the date on which this patent issues and ends twenty years from the filing date of the application or, if the application contains a specific reference to an earlier filed application or applications under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121, 365(c), or 386(c), twenty years from the filing date of the earliest such application (“the twenty-year term”), subject to the payment of maintenance fees as provided by 35 U.S.C. 41(b), and any extension as provided by 35 U.S.C. 154(b) or 156 or any disclaimer under 35 U.S.C. 253.

If this application was filed prior to June 8, 1995, the term of this patent begins on the date on which this patent issues and ends on the later of seventeen years from the date of the grant of this patent or the twenty-year term set forth above for patents resulting from applications filed on or after June 8, 1995, subject to the payment of maintenance fees as provided by 35 U.S.C. 41(b) and any extension as provided by 35 U.S.C. 156 or any disclaimer under 35 U.S.C. 253.



US011731752B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Barton et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 11,731,752 B1**

(45) **Date of Patent:** **Aug. 22, 2023**

(54) **REMOVABLE AIRCRAFT FUSELAGE
EXPANSION WINDOW**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
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(22) Filed: **Dec. 22, 2022**

(Continued)

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Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 63/292,769, filed on Dec.
22, 2021.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(51) **Int. Cl.**

B64C 1/32 (2006.01)

B64C 1/14 (2006.01)

E05C 9/08 (2006.01)

B64D 25/08 (2006.01)

Aspects of this disclosure relate to a removable fuselage expansion window assembly, comprising: a window panel; an outer window frame; a window bracket configured to secure the window panel to the outer window frame; an inner window frame with an indented rim that is aligned with the window bracket; and a latch assembly located below the indented rim of the inner window frame between the outer window frame and the inner window frame. The latch assembly includes one or more retainers to hold a bottom portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within a rectangular frame formed by vertical and horizontal beams in an outer wall of an aircraft, wherein the latch assembly includes a lever that releases the removable fuselage expansion window assembly by disengaging the one or more retainers from the rectangular frame when the lever is pulled.

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

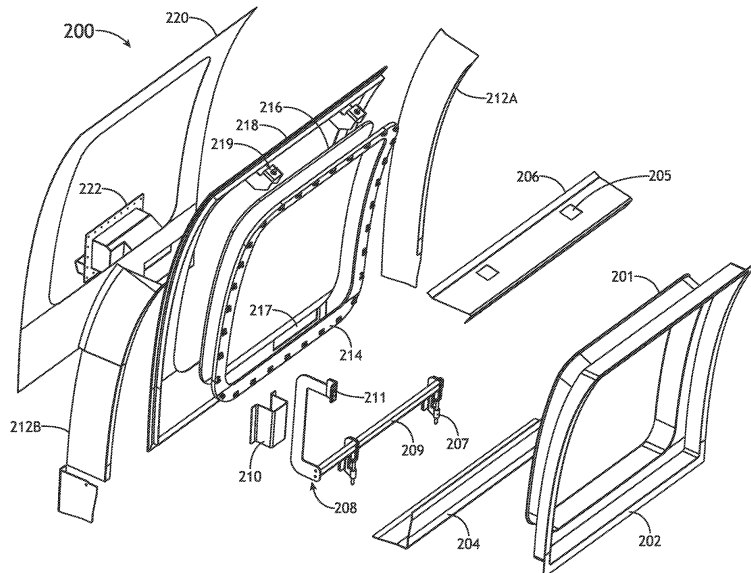
CPC **B64C 1/1484** (2013.01); **B64C 1/32**
(2013.01); **B64D 25/08** (2013.01); **E05C 9/08**
(2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC B64C 1/1484; B64C 1/32; B64C 1/1492;
B64C 1/1407; B64C 1/1423; B64C
1/1461; E05C 9/08; B64D 25/08

See application file for complete search history.

20 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



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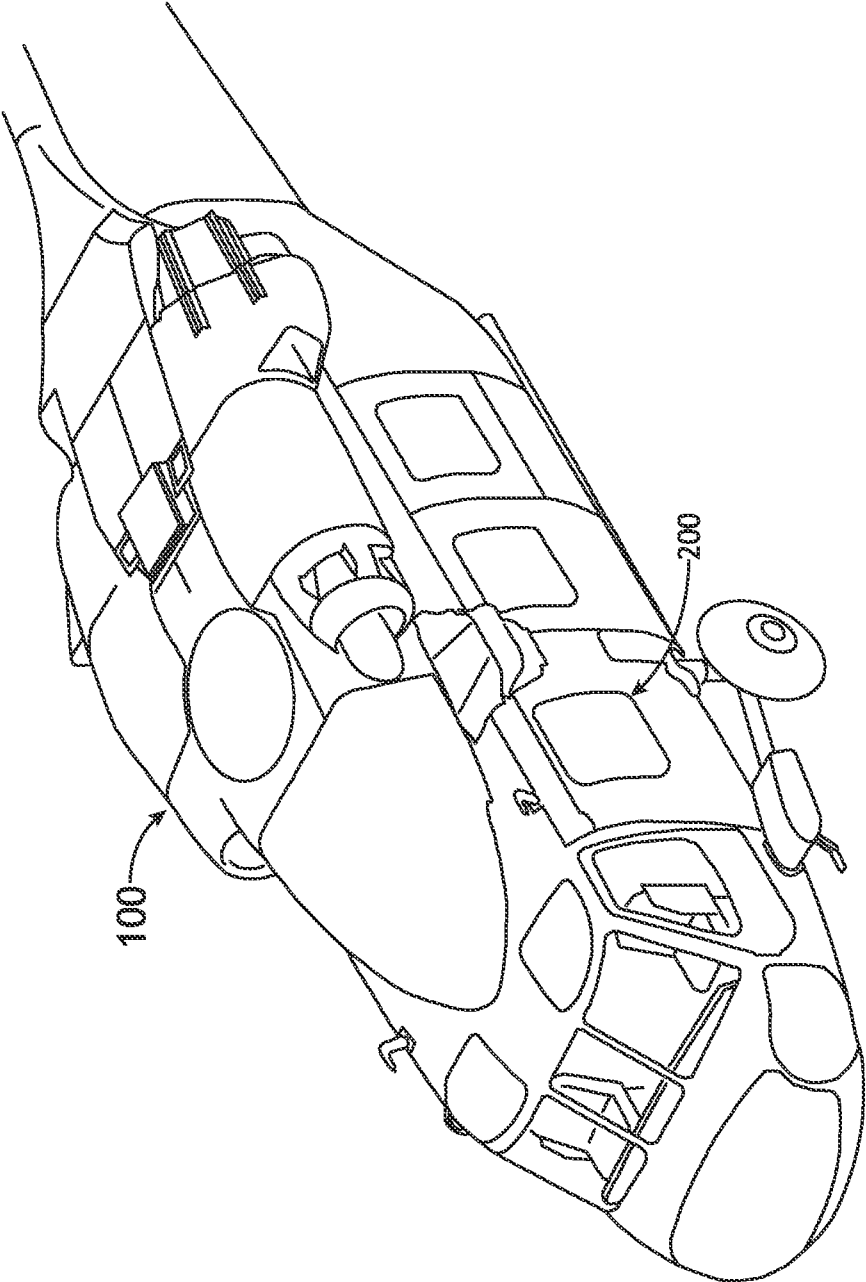


FIG.1

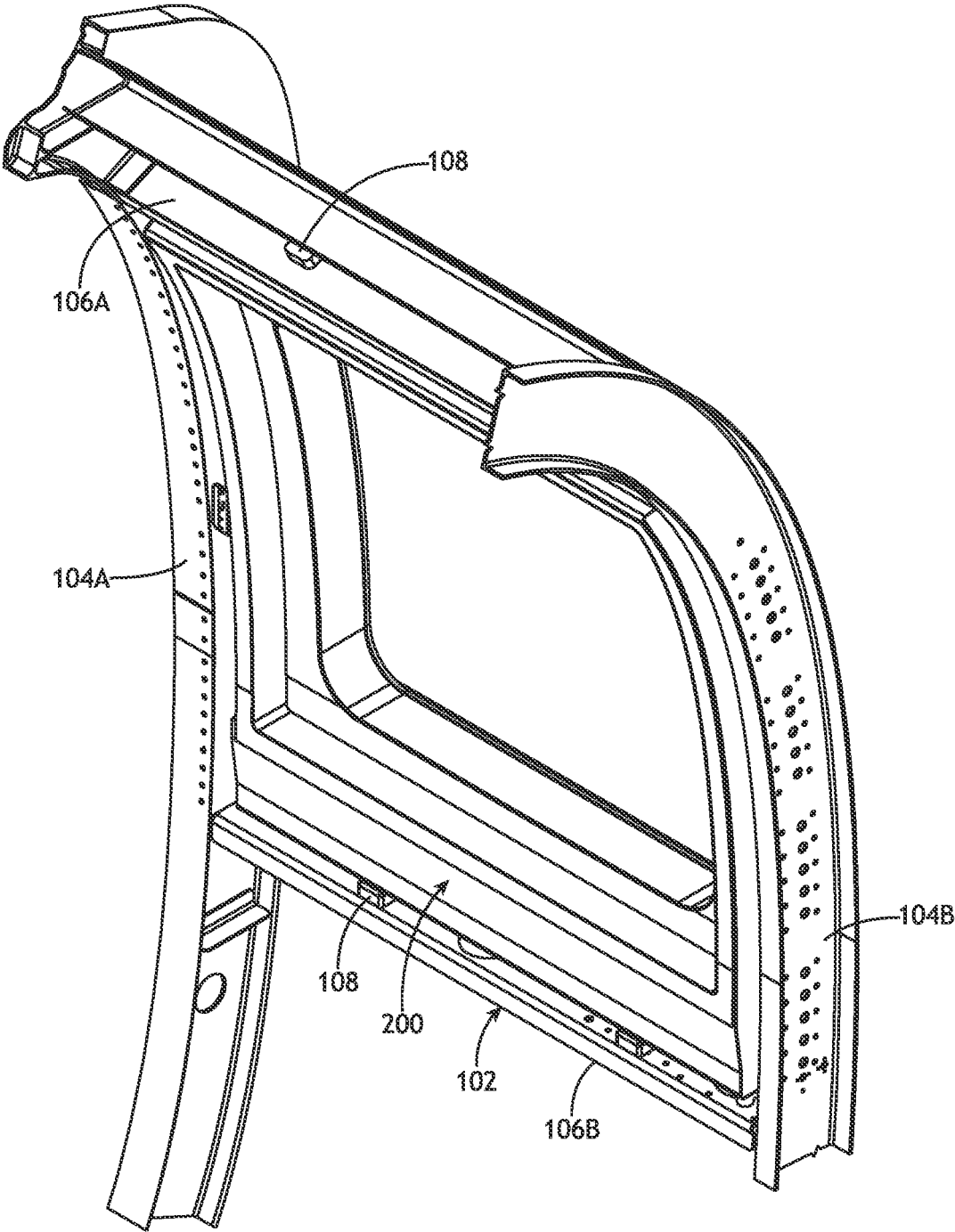


FIG. 2

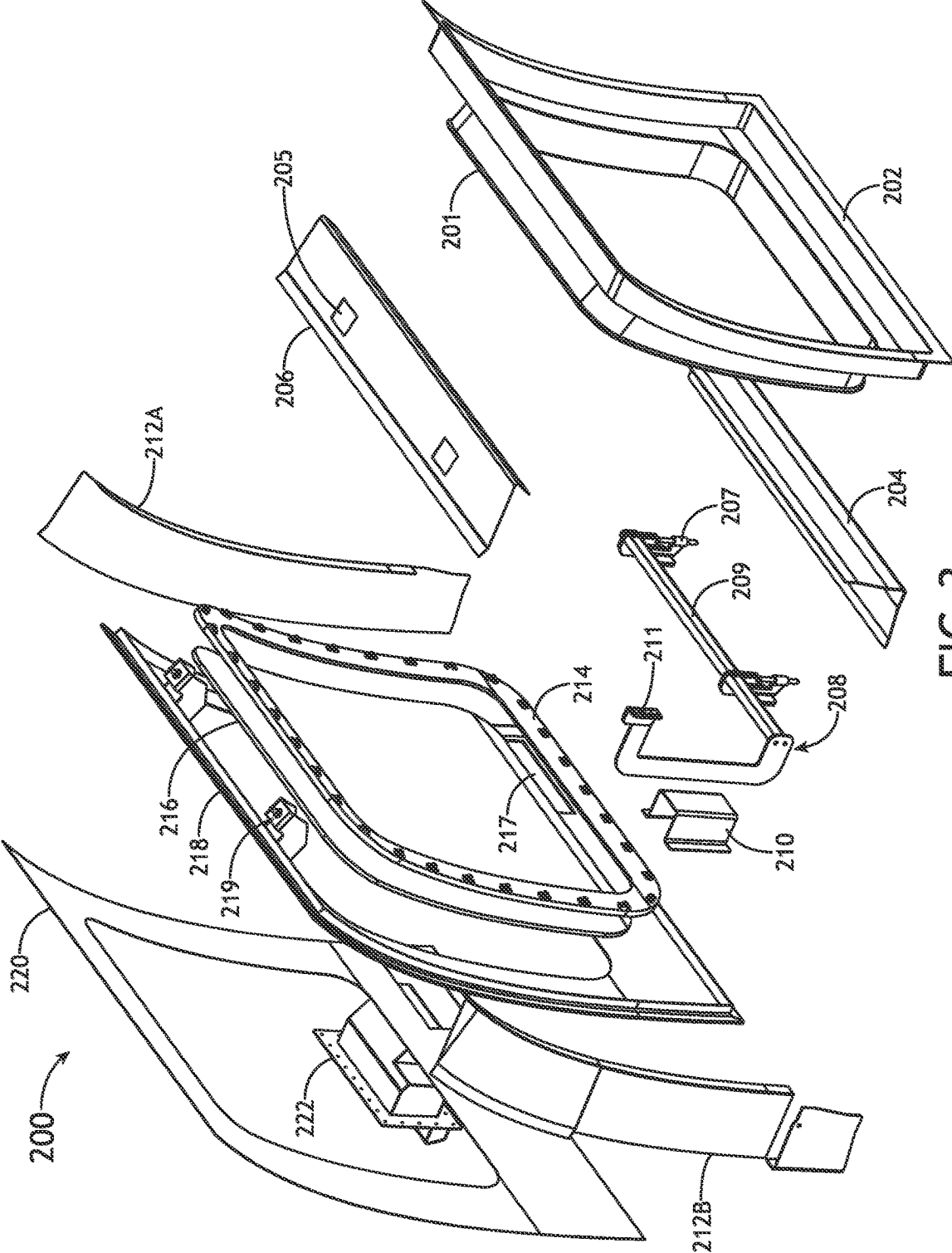


FIG. 3

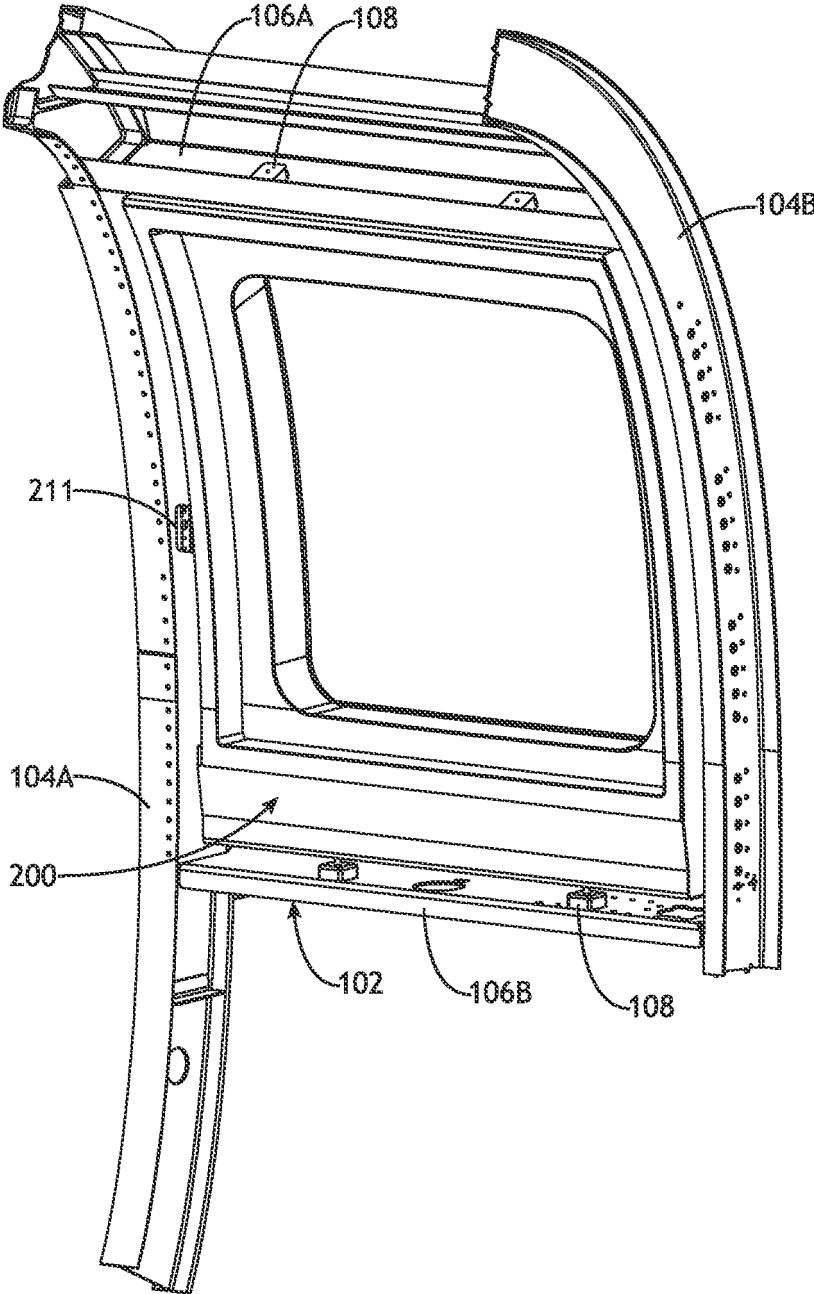


FIG. 4

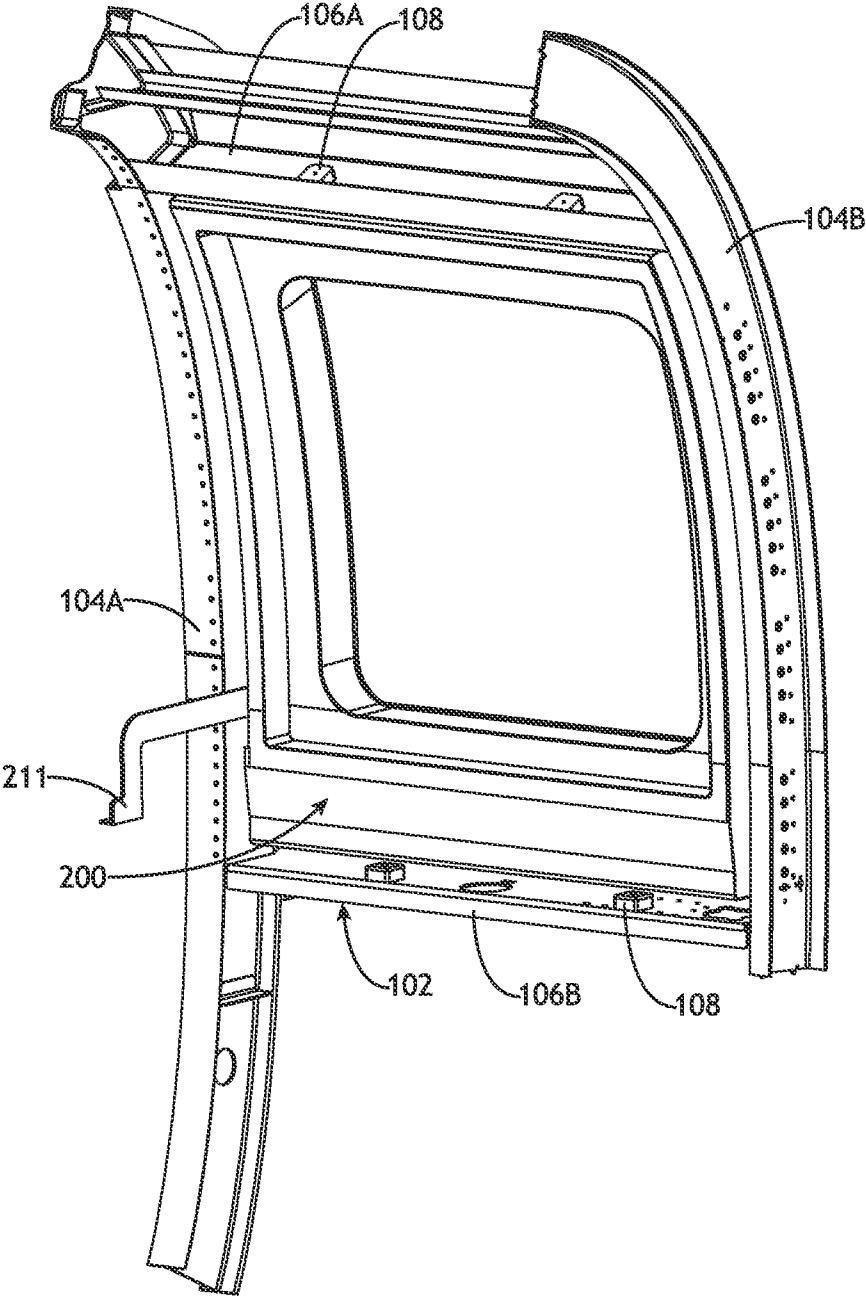


FIG. 5

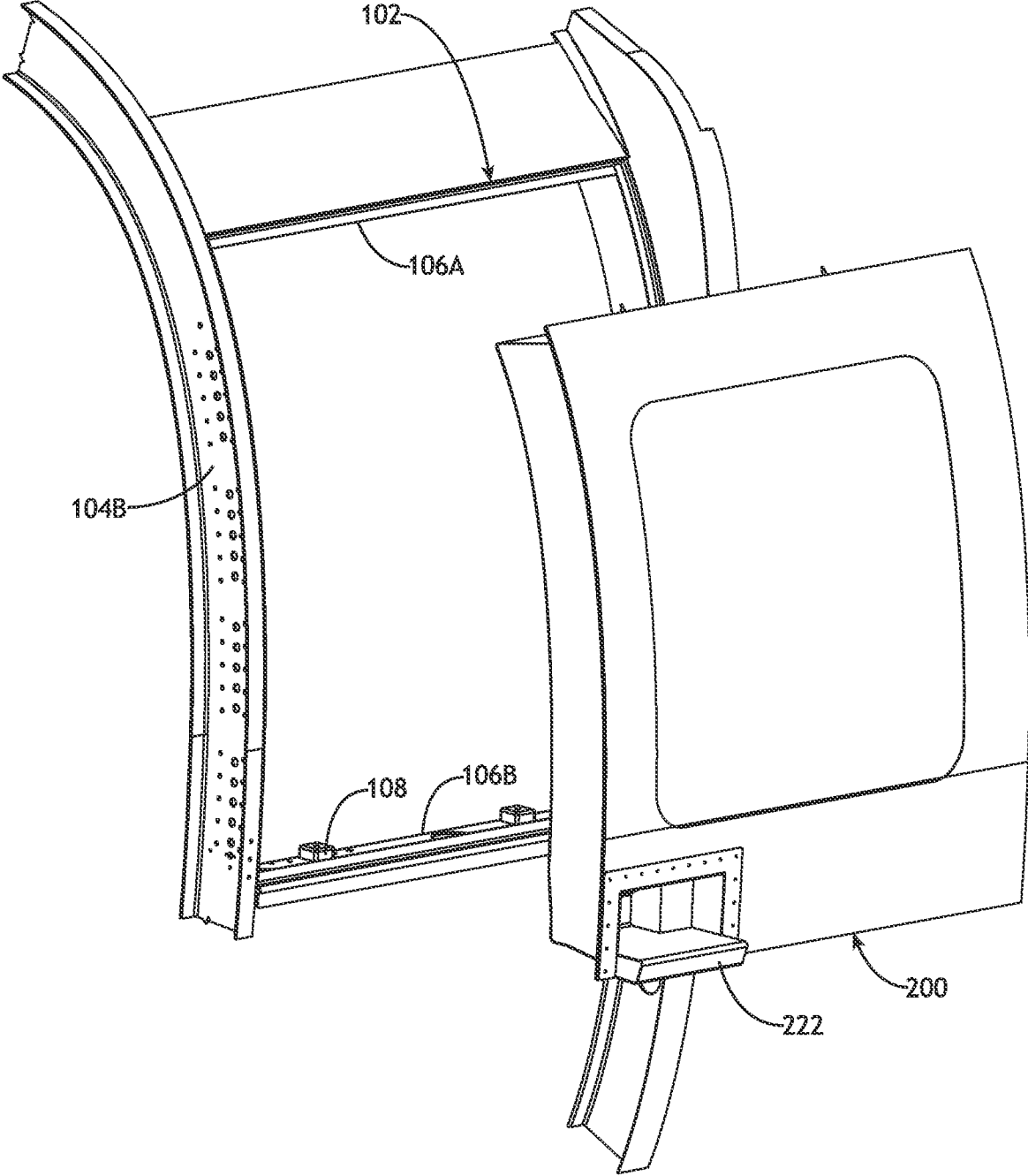


FIG.6

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REMOVABLE AIRCRAFT FUSELAGE EXPANSION WINDOW

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 63/292,769, filed Dec. 22, 2021, and titled "REMOVABLE AIRCRAFT FUSELAGE EXPANSION WINDOW," which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present disclosure relates to aircraft window installations and/or modifications.

BACKGROUND

Some helicopters and other aircraft do not come equipped with windows that can be removed for emergency egress. To improve passenger safety, it would be beneficial to add emergency egress windows via aftermarket installations and/or modifications.

SUMMARY

Aspects of this disclosure generally relate to a removable fuselage expansion window assembly that can be installed to add an emergency egress window to an aircraft. In embodiments, the removable fuselage expansion window assembly includes: a window panel; an outer window frame with a first set of one or more retainers extending from a top portion of the outer window frame to hold a top portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within a rectangular frame formed by vertical and horizontal beams in an outer wall of the aircraft; a window bracket configured to secure the window panel to the outer window frame; an inner window frame with an indented rim that is aligned with the window bracket; and a latch assembly located below the indented rim of the inner window frame between the outer window frame and the inner window frame. The latch assembly includes a second set of one or more retainers to hold a bottom portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within the rectangular frame formed by the vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, wherein the latch assembly includes a lever that releases the removable fuselage expansion window assembly by disengaging the second set of one or more retainers from the rectangular frame when the lever is pulled, thereby providing an emergency exit or escape window for the aircraft.

This Summary is provided solely as an introduction to subject matter that is fully described in the Detailed Description and Drawings. The Summary should not be considered to describe essential features nor be used to determine the scope of the Claims. Moreover, it is to be understood that both the foregoing Summary and the following Detailed Description are example and explanatory only and are not necessarily restrictive of the subject matter claimed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The detailed description is provided with reference to the accompanying figures. The use of the same reference numbers in different instances in the description and the figures may indicate similar or identical items. Various embodi-

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ments or examples ("examples") of the present disclosure are disclosed in the following detailed description and the accompanying drawings. The drawings are not necessarily to scale. In general, operations of disclosed processes may be performed in an arbitrary order, unless otherwise provided in the claims.

FIG. 1 illustrates an aircraft with a removable fuselage expansion window assembly, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly plugged into a rectangular frame defined by vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure.

FIG. 3 is an exploded view of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within the rectangular frame defined by vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly while pulling a lever that releases the removable fuselage expansion window assembly from the rectangular frame defined by vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly after releasing and jettisoning the removable fuselage expansion window assembly from the rectangular frame defined by vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reference will now be made in detail to the subject matter disclosed, which is illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

FIGS. 1 through 6 illustrate embodiments of a removable fuselage expansion window assembly that can be installed to add an emergency egress window to an aircraft (e.g., a helicopter). For example, FIG. 1 illustrates an aircraft 100 with a removable fuselage expansion window assembly 200 installed, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure. In the illustrated example embodiment, the fuselage expansion facilitates mission modification to the UH-60 Helicopter cabin interior allowing command/control and custom conversion to the base line aircraft. In other embodiments, the removable fuselage expansion window 200 may facilitate modification to other aircraft cabin interiors.

As shown in FIG. 2, the removable fuselage expansion window assembly 200 may be plugged into a rectangular frame 102 defined by vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft 100. For example, the rectangular frame 102 may be formed by a left side vertical beam 104A, a right side vertical beam 104B, a top horizontal beam 106A, and a bottom horizontal beam 106B. In embodiments, the rectangular frame may include cooperatively shaped fittings 108 (e.g., sockets, slots, etc.) configured to engage with retainers (e.g., pins, clips, tabs, etc.) extending from portions of the removable fuselage window assembly 200. For example, the horizontal beams 106A and 106B of the rectangular frame 102 may include cooperatively shaped fittings 108.

In embodiments, the rectangular frame **102** is appropriately sized to meet emergency egress requirements. For example, the rectangular frame **102** may have a width of at least 19 inches and a height of at least 26 inches. This qualifies the removable fuselage window assembly **200** to be used as a Type IV Emergency Exit (19"×26") as long as there is seating for nine or less passengers. In some embodiments, the removable fuselage window assembly **200** can also be certified for ditching over water. The removable fuselage window assembly **200** may only qualify as an Escape Window for aircraft with seating of ten or more passengers (most likely with no ditching over water certification). Escape Windows should not be smaller than (19"×17"). As such, if the removable fuselage window assembly **200** is only to be configured as an Escape Window, the rectangular frame **102** may have a width of at least 19 inches and a height of at least 17 inches.

FIG. 3 is an exploded view of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200**, in accordance with an example embodiment of this disclosure. As shown in FIG. 3, the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** includes a window panel **216** configured to be secured to an outer window frame **218**. For example, the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** may include a window bracket **214** configured to secure the window panel **216** to the outer window frame **218**.

In some embodiments, the outer window frame **218** includes a first set of one or more retainers **219** extending from a top portion of the outer window frame **218**. These retainers **219** are configured to hold a top portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** within the rectangular frame **102** formed by vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft **100**, as discussed above. For example, the first set of retainers **219** may be configured to engage with (e.g., insert into or attach to) one or more fittings **108** in the top horizontal beam **106A** of the rectangular frame **102**.

The removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** further includes an inner window frame **202** with an indented rim **201** that is aligned with the window bracket **214**. For example, the indented rim **201** may surround or overlap with the window bracket **214**, or alternatively, the indented rim **201** may be surrounded by the window bracket **214**.

A latch assembly **208** is located below the indented rim **201** of the inner window frame **202**, between the outer window frame **218** and the inner window **202** frame. The latch assembly **208** includes a second set of one or more retainers **207** configured to hold a bottom portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** within the rectangular frame **102** formed by the vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft **100**. For example, the second set of retainers **207** may be configured to engage with (e.g., insert into or attach to) one or more fittings **108** in the bottom horizontal beam **106B** of the rectangular frame **102**. The latch assembly **208** further includes a lever **211** that releases the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** by disengaging the second set of retainers **207** from the rectangular frame **102** when the lever **211** is pulled, thereby providing an emergency exit or escape window for the aircraft **100** (i.e., through the rectangular frame **102**).

In some embodiments, the latch assembly **208** includes a bar **209** connected to the lever **211**, and wherein the second set of retainers **207** are connected to the bar **209**. Pulling the lever **211** causes the bar **209** to rotate about its longitudinal axis. This movement turns or pivots the second set of

retainers **207** about the bar **209** so that the second set of retainers **207** become reoriented and consequently become disengaged from the fittings **108** in the bottom horizontal beam **106B** of the rectangular frame **102**.

The removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** may further include a movement restrictor **210** located behind the lever **211** of the latch assembly **208** to prevent the lever **211** from being accidentally pushed forward so as not to accidentally release the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** from the rectangular frame **102** or render the lever **211** unreachable (e.g., stuck too far within a crevice between the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** and the rectangular frame **102**). The movement restrictor **210** may comprise any structural element (e.g., a solid or hollow block, metal/plastic close out structure, etc.) placed behind the lever **211** to prevent its forward movement **211**.

In some embodiments, the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** further includes two side members **212A** and **212B**, a base member **204**, and a top member **206** that surround the outer window frame **218** and the inner window frame **202**. These surrounding structures may also serve to secure or help hold the other components of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** together. In embodiments, the top member **206** includes openings **205** for the first set of retainers **219** to be inserted through so that the retainers **219** stick out from the top of the top member **206** of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200**. The base member **204** also includes a respective set of openings for the second set of retainers **207** to be inserted through so that the retainers **207** stick out from the bottom of the base member **204** of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200**. The base member **204** may also have a raised edge that conceals most of the latch assembly **208**. For example, the raised edge of the base member **204** may conceal all or most of the latch assembly **208** except for the lever **211** which must remain accessible.

The removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** may further include a skin **220** that covers an outer surface of the outer window frame **208**. The skin **220** may be the same as or similar to a skin that covers other portions of the aircraft fuselage. The skin **220** may include an opening for a step **222** located below the window panel **216** on the outside of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200**. For example, the step **222** may be mounted within a small opening **217** in the outer window frame **218** that is located below the window panel opening.

An example process is illustrated in FIGS. 4 through 6 for jettisoning the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** from the rectangular frame **102** formed by rectangular frame **102** defined by vertical and horizontal beams (i.e., vertical beams **104A**, **104B** and horizontal beams **106A**, **106B**) in the outer wall of the aircraft **100**. FIG. 4 shows the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** within the rectangular frame **102** in its normal installed configuration. FIG. 5 shows the lever **211** being pulled to release the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** from the rectangular frame **102** (i.e., by disengaging retainers **207** of the latch assembly **208** from cooperatively shaped fittings **108** of the bottom beam **106B** of the rectangular frame **102**). At this point, the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** can be pushed or kicked out to jettison the removable fuselage expansion window assembly **200** from the rectangular frame **102** (as shown in FIG. 6), thereby providing a means of egress for passengers onboard the aircraft **100**.

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Although the technology has been described with reference to the embodiments illustrated in the attached drawing figures, equivalents may be employed, and substitutions may be made herein without departing from the scope of the technology as recited in the claims. Components illustrated and described herein are examples of devices and components that may be used to implement the embodiments of the present invention and may be replaced with other devices and components without departing from the scope of the invention. Furthermore, any dimensions, degrees, and/or numerical ranges provided herein are to be understood as non-limiting examples unless otherwise specified in the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A removable fuselage expansion window assembly for an aircraft, comprising:

a window panel;

an outer window frame with a first set of retainers extending from a top portion of the outer window frame to hold a top portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within a rectangular frame formed by vertical and horizontal beams in an outer wall of the aircraft;

a window bracket configured to secure the window panel to the outer window frame;

an inner window frame with an indented rim that is aligned with the window bracket; and

a latch assembly located below the indented rim of the inner window frame between the outer window frame and the inner window frame, the latch assembly including a second set of retainers to hold a bottom portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within the rectangular frame formed by the vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, wherein the latch assembly includes a lever that releases the removable fuselage expansion window assembly by disengaging the second set of retainers from the rectangular frame when the lever is pulled.

2. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **1**, wherein the latch assembly comprises a bar connected to the lever, and wherein the second set of retainers are connected to the bar.

3. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **1**, further comprising a movement restrictor located behind the lever of the latch assembly to prevent the lever from being accidentally pushed forward.

4. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **1**, further comprising two side members, a base member, and a top member that surround the outer window frame and the inner window frame.

5. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **4**, wherein the top and base members include respective openings for the first set of retainers and the second set of retainers.

6. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **4**, wherein the base member includes a raised edge that conceals most of the latch assembly.

7. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **1**, further comprising a skin that covers an outer surface of the outer window frame.

8. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **1**, further comprising a step located below the window panel.

9. The removable fuselage expansion window assembly of claim **8**, wherein the step is mounted within an opening in the outer window frame.

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10. An emergency egress window system for an aircraft, comprising:

a rectangular frame formed by vertical and horizontal beams in an outer wall of the aircraft; and

a removable fuselage expansion window assembly, comprising:

a window panel;

an outer window frame with a first set of retainers extending from a top portion of the outer window frame to hold a top portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within the rectangular frame formed by the vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft;

a window bracket configured to secure the window panel to the outer window frame;

an inner window frame with an indented rim that is aligned with the window bracket; and

a latch assembly located below the indented rim of the inner window frame between the outer window frame and the inner window frame, the latch assembly including a second set of retainers to hold a bottom portion of the removable fuselage expansion window assembly within the rectangular frame formed by the vertical and horizontal beams in the outer wall of the aircraft, wherein the latch assembly includes a lever that releases the removable fuselage expansion window assembly by disengaging the second set of retainers from the rectangular frame when the lever is pulled.

11. The emergency egress window system of claim **10**, wherein the latch assembly comprises a bar connected to the lever, and wherein the second set of retainers are connected to the bar.

12. The emergency egress window system of claim **10**, wherein the removable fuselage expansion window assembly further comprises a movement restrictor located behind the lever of the latch assembly to prevent the lever from being accidentally pushed forward.

13. The emergency egress window system of claim **10**, wherein the removable fuselage expansion window assembly further comprises two side members, a base member, and a top member that surround the outer window frame and the inner window frame.

14. The emergency egress window system of claim **13**, wherein the top and base members include respective openings for the first set of retainers and the second set of retainers.

15. The emergency egress window system of claim **13**, wherein the base member includes a raised edge that conceals most of the latch assembly.

16. The emergency egress window system of claim **10**, wherein the removable fuselage expansion window assembly further comprises a skin that covers an outer surface of the outer window frame.

17. The emergency egress window system of claim **10**, wherein the removable fuselage expansion window assembly further comprises a step located below the window panel.

18. The emergency egress window system of claim **17**, wherein the step is mounted within an opening in the outer window frame.

19. The emergency egress window system of claim **10**, wherein the horizontal beams of the rectangular frame include cooperatively shaped fittings configured to engage with the first set of retainers extending from the top portion of the outer window frame and the second set of retainers extending from the latch assembly.

20. The emergency egress window system of claim 10, wherein the rectangular frame has a width of at least 19 inches and a height of at least 26 inches.

* * * * *