In this example, for a seat pitch of 81.3 cm (32 inches), the legroom 202, as defined by the distance between an edge 210 of the aft seat 206 to a literature pocket 212 at the seatback of the seat 204, is about 27.2 cm (10.7 inches). Such an amount of legroom may be rather limited, especially for tall passengers.

With reference to Figure 1, the seatback tray table 106 is typically pivotally mounted such that it can be stowed against the seatback 100 and hinged down and away from the seatback 100 into a generally horizontal position for use by the passenger seated aft of the seat. Conventionally, the cup holder 110 is usually installed on the tray table 106, and the coat hanger 112 is traditionally integrated with the tray table latch with a small hook due to space constrain. With such arrangements, when the tray table 106 is stowed, the cup holder 110 becomes inaccessible. The small hook is limited in use due to its size and position. This may cause some inconvenience to passengers.

More recently, there are passenger seats that provide an independent cup holder 110 behind the tray table 106 (as shown in Figure 1), and in this case the cup holder 110 will not be accessible while the tray table 106 is deployed. An independent coat hanger 112 may be provided at the side of seat to move away from the tray table 106. However, this may cause confusion between passengers as to the correct hanger corresponding to their respective seats.

A need therefore exists to provide devices and methods that seek to address at least one of the above problems, or to provide a useful alternative.

SUMMARY

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a seatback for a passenger seat, the seatback comprising:

an upwardly extending base having a front and a rear, the front capable of supporting a passenger; and

~~a pocket attached to the rear;~~

a tray table attached to the rear and operable between a stowage position and a use position; and wherein the rear has a longitudinal length and a transverse width, with

the tray table, when in the stowage position, ~~being at least partly transversely aligned with pocket~~ occupying a predetermined portion of the transverse width, and, when in the use position, extending rearwardly of the base and occupying substantially the whole transverse width.

The seatback may further comprise a pocket attached to the rear, and the tray table, when in the stowage position, may be transversely adjacent the pocket.

The tray table may comprise a first half and a second half movably coupled to the first half such that the second half may be substantially contiguous with the first half in the use position, and folded to the first half in the stowage position.

The second half may be coupled to the first half by hinge means.

The tray table may be pivotally attached to the base by first and second rotatable arms.

The first half may be connected to the first rotatable arm, and the second half may comprise a latch configured to engage with a support member connected to the second arm when the tray table is in the use position.

The tray table may be slidable at the same transverse level to or from the base when in the use position.

The seatback may further comprise at least one extendable rail connected to a respective one of the first half and second half for sliding the tray table to or from the base.

The pocket may comprise an outwardly facing surface configured to receive at least one of a cup holder and a coat hanger.

The cup holder and the coat hanger may be independently operable between a folded position in which the cup holder and the coat hanger may be flush with said surface, and a deployed position in which the cup holder and the coat hanger may extend away from said surface.

The pocket may comprise an outwardly facing surface configured to support an electronic device mounted thereto.

The pocket may be made of a rigid material.

According to second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a passenger seat comprising a seatback as defined in the first aspect.

According to a third aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a seatback for a passenger seat, the method comprising the steps of:

forming an upwardly extending base having a front and a rear, the front being capable of supporting a passenger, and the rear having a longitudinal length and a transverse width;

~~attaching a pocket to the rear;~~

~~attaching~~ forming a tray table ~~to the rear, the tray table being~~ operable between a stowage position and a use position, such that the tray table, when in the stowage position, ~~is at least partly transversely aligned with pocket~~ occupies a predetermined portion of the transverse width, and, when in the use position, extends rearwardly of the base and occupies substantially the whole transverse width; and

attaching the tray table to the rear.

The method may further comprise attaching a pocket to the rear such that the tray table, when in the stowage position, is transversely adjacent the pocket.

The method may further comprise attaching at least one of a cup holder and a coat hanger to an outwardly facing surface of the pocket.

Attaching at least one of a cup holder and a coat hanger to an outwardly facing surface of the pocket may comprise pivotally mounting each of said cup holder and said coat hanger to a complementary depression formed on said outwardly facing surface.

The method may further comprise mounting a support for an electronic device to an outwardly facing surface of the pocket.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Embodiments of the invention will be better understood and readily apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art from the following written description, by way of example only, and in conjunction with the drawings, in which:

CLAIMS

1. A seatback for a passenger seat, the seatback comprising:

an upwardly extending base having a front and a rear, the front capable of supporting a passenger; and

~~a pocket attached to the rear;~~

a tray table attached to the rear and operable between a stowage position and a use position; ~~and~~

wherein the rear has a longitudinal length and a transverse width, with the tray table, when in the stowage position, occupying a predetermined portion of the transverse width, and, when in the use position, extending rearwardly of the base and occupying substantially the whole transverse width ~~being at least partly transversely aligned with pocket~~.

2. The seatback as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a pocket attached to the rear, wherein the tray table, when in the stowage position, is transversely adjacent the pocket.

~~2~~3. The seatback as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the tray table comprises a first half and a second half movably coupled to the first half such that the second half is substantially contiguous with the first half in the use position, and folded to the first half in the stowage position.

~~3~~4. The seatback as claimed in claim ~~2~~3, wherein the second half is coupled to the first half by hinge means.

~~4~~5. The seatback as claimed in claim ~~2~~-3 or ~~3~~4, wherein the tray table is pivotally attached to the base by first and second rotatable arms.

~~5~~6. The seatback as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first half is connected to the first rotatable arm, and the second half comprises a latch configured to engage with a support member connected to the second arm when the tray table is in the use position.

~~6~~7. The seatback as claimed in any one of claims ~~2~~-3 to ~~5~~6, wherein the tray table is slidable at the same transverse level to or from the base when in the use position.

~~7~~8. The seatback as claimed in claim ~~6~~7, further comprising at least one extendable rail connected to a respective one of the first half and second half for sliding the tray table to or from the base.

~~8~~9. The seatback as claimed in any one of ~~the preceding~~ claims 2 to 8, wherein the pocket comprises an outwardly facing surface configured to receive at least one of a cup holder and a coat hanger.

~~9~~10. The seatback as claimed in claim ~~8~~9, wherein the cup holder and the coat hanger are independently operable between a folded position in which the cup holder and the coat hanger are flush with said surface, and a deployed position in which the cup holder and the coat hanger extend away from said surface.

~~10~~11. The seat back as claimed in any one of claims ~~1~~ 2 to ~~7~~8, wherein the pocket comprises an outwardly facing surface configured to support an electronic device mounted thereto.

~~11. The seatback as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the pocket is made of a rigid material.~~

12. A passenger seat comprising a seatback as claimed in any one of the preceding claims.

13. A method of manufacturing a seatback for a passenger seat, the method comprising the steps of:

forming an upwardly extending base having a front and a rear, the front being capable of supporting a passenger, and the rear having a longitudinal length and a transverse width;

~~attaching a pocket to the rear;~~

~~attaching~~ forming a tray table ~~to the rear, the tray table being~~ operable between a stowage position and a use position, such that the tray table, when in the stowage position, ~~is at least partly transversely aligned with pocket~~ occupies a predetermined portion of the transverse width, and, when in the use position, extends rearwardly of the base and occupies substantially the whole transverse width; and

attaching the tray table to the rear.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, further comprising attaching a pocket to the rear such that the tray table, when in the stowage position, is transversely adjacent the pocket.

~~14~~15. The method as claimed in claim ~~13~~14, further comprising attaching at least one of a cup holder and a coat hanger to an outwardly facing surface of the pocket.

~~15~~16. The method as claimed in claim ~~14~~15, wherein attaching at least one of a cup holder and a coat hanger to an outwardly facing surface of the pocket comprises pivotally mounting each of said cup holder and said coat hanger to a complementary depression formed on said outwardly facing surface.

~~16~~17. The method as claimed in claim ~~13~~14, further comprising attaching a support for an electronic device to an outwardly facing surface of the pocket.