What is claimed is:

1. A lubricating grease composition comprising:

a. an oil of lubricating viscosity,

b. 0.1% by weight to 45% by weight of a metallic soap thickener;

c. 0.1% by weight to 10% by weight of a borate ester comprising at least one alkyl group, wherein the alkyl group is a 2-propylheptyl group, a 2-butyloctylgroup, a 2-hexyldecyl group, or a 2-octyldodecyl group, having 10 to 32 carbon atoms, said alkyl group having a branch at the β or higher position.

2. The lubricating grease composition of claim 1 wherein the borate ester comprises multiple alkyl groups each independently having 10 to 32 carbon atoms, said alkyl groups having a branch at the β or higher position.

3. The lubricating grease composition of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the alkyl group is branched at the β position.

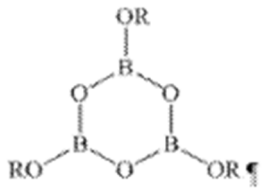
4. The lubricating grease composition of any of claims 1 through 3 wherein the alkyl group has a structure represented by $-CH_2-C(R^1)(R^2)H$, where R^1 is an alkyl group of 7 to 18 carbon atoms and R^2 is an alkyl group having fewer carbon atoms than R^1.

5. The lubricating grease composition of any of claims 1 through 4 wherein the alkyl group has a structure represented by $-CH_2-C(R^1)(R^2)H$, where R^1 is an alkyl group of 7 to 18 carbon atoms and R^2 is an alkyl group having 4 fewer carbon atoms than R^1.

6. The lubricating grease composition of any of claims 1 through 5 wherein the alkyl group is a 2-propylheptyl group, a 2-butyloctyl group, a 2-hexyldecyl group, or a 2-octyldodecyl group.

7. The lubricating grease composition of any of claims 1 through 6 wherein the alkyl group is derived from a Guerbet alcohol.

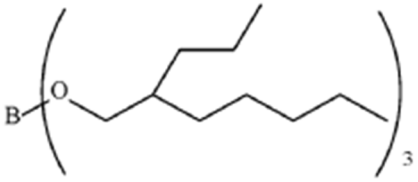
8. The lubricating grease composition of any of claims 1 through 7 wherein the borate ester is represented by one or more of the formulas $(RO)_3B$, $(RO)_2B\text{-}O\text{-}B(OR)_2$, or



wherein each R is independently an alkyl group having 10 to 32 carbon atoms and having a branch at the β or higher position.

9. The lubricating grease composition of any of claims 1 through 8 wherein the borate ester comprises a trialkylborate.

10. The lubricating grease of any of claims 1 through 9 wherein the borate ester comprises a material represented by the structure



11. The lubricating grease of any of claims 1 through 10 wherein the metallic soap is reaction of an alkali or alkaline earth metal with a fatty acid.

12. The lubricating grease composition of claim 11 wherein the alkali metal is lithium.

13. The lubricating grease of claim 11 wherein the alkaline earth metal is calcium.

14. The lubricating grease of claim 11 wherein the fatty acid comprises a derivative of castor oil.

15. The lubricating grease of claim 11 wherein the fatty acid comprises a 12-hydroxycarboxylic acid.

16. The lubricating grease of claim 15 wherein the 12-hydroxycarboxylic acid is 12-hydroxystearic or ricinoleic,or mixtures thereof.

17. The lubricating grease of any of claims 1 to 16 wherein the lubricating grease comprises:

0.1% by weight to 45% by weight of the metallic soap thickener; and

0.1% by weight to 10% by weight of the borate ester.

18. The lubricating grease of any of claims 1 to 17 further comprising one or more additives.

19. A method for lubricating a mechanical device, comprising supplying thereto the lubricating grease of any of claims 1 through 16.