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(74) Agent: WALLINGTON-DUMMER PATENT AND  
TRADE MARK ATTORNEYS; PO Box 3888, Sydney,  
NSW 2001 (AU).

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(71) Applicant: INTEGRATED PLASTICS PTY LIMITED  
[AU/AU]; 12 Birmingham Avenue, Villawood, NSW 2163  
(AU).

(72) Inventor: MELLEN, Nick; 12 Birmingham Avenue,  
Villawood, NSW 2163 (AU).

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(54) Title: ERGONOMIC INTEGRAL HANDLE ASSEMBLY

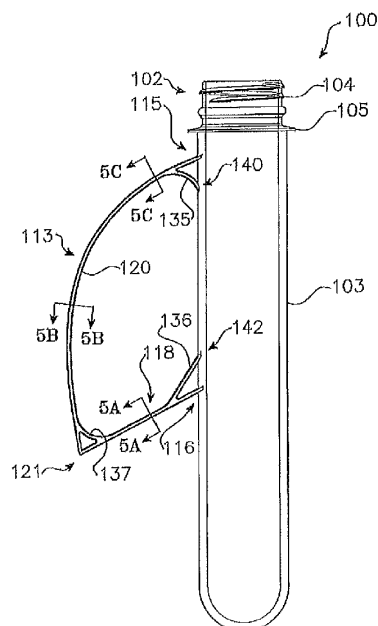


Fig. 2

(57) Abstract: A method of controlling a preform for stretch blow-moulding a container with an integrally formed handle; the preform comprising a body portion and the integrally formed handle; the preform transferred from a preform supply source to a blow moulding die for blowing the container; the method including the steps of - passing the preform through a preform handle orientating apparatus, - transferring the preform to a preform transportation system, - maintaining orientation of the preform handle imposed by the preform handle orientating apparatus during transfer to the preform transportation system and transfer to the blow moulding die, - rotating the preforms during transport along the transportation system past an array of preform heating elements while shielding the integrally formed handle from excessive exposure to the heating elements, - transferring the preform from the transportation system to the blow moulding die, and wherein the handle comprises a loop of orientable material extending between an upper connection region and a lower connection region on the body portion of the preform; characterised in that the handle has a generally uniform cross section from proximate the lower connection region to a gradually widening cross section approaching the upper connection region; the cross section reaching and maintaining a maximum width proximate the upper connection region.

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