

Description

The present invention relates to gas seals between stationary and rotating members, such as, for example, rotary seals in gas turbine engines. More particularly, it relates to blade tips or labyrinth type gas seals, such as, for example, knife edges, for gas turbine engines.

A variety of rotary seals are used in gas turbine engines. Such rotary seals are generally of the type including rotating members cooperating across a narrow gap with another member which is relatively stationary. Such seals are used, in some cases, between stationary members and a rotating shaft or drum for the purpose of maintaining different pressures in chambers on each side of the seal. For example, in one type of gas turbine engine, a plurality of rows of rotor blades extend radially outward from a rotor shaft across a flow path for the working medium gases. Collaterally, a plurality of rows of stator vanes extend radially inwardly across the flow path from a stator case or shroud. In some types, the stator vanes are cantilevered inwardly from the stator case. The vanes are positioned to direct the working gases toward or away from the adjacent rotor blades. A stator has a sealing surface circumscribing the tips of blades in each row of blades and, in the cantilever stator vane types, the rotor is provided with a sealing surface circumscribing the tips of the stator vanes in each stator vane row.

As the clearance between the tips of the blades or vanes in each row and the corresponding sealing surface is increased, substantial amounts of working medium gas escape circumferentially over the tips of the blades and/or stators, reducing the aerodynamic efficiency. Furthermore, when the clearance is increased, additional amounts of working medium gases leak axially over the tips from the downstream end to the upstream end of the blades or rotors. Therefore it is desirable to keep the clearance to a minimum. However, it is also necessary to accommodate various dimensional changes which occur during initial startup, thermal excursions, high G turns, etc. Generally, there is some wear-in of the parts under these conditions, particularly during engine startup.

It is known that the more desirable condition is for the tips or knife edges to cut grooves into the corresponding sealing surface rather than for the tips or knife edges to sustain wear. U. S. Patents 4,238,170 and 4,239,452 provide the sealing surface of the stator or shroud with interior circumferential grooves circumscribing the tips of the blades, but this arrangement presents alignment difficulties while failing to accommodate thermally-induced axial displacement of the blades relative to the stator or shroud.

A variety of rotary seal arrangements have been disclosed in the literature in which rotating members generate, cut or abrade a path in a softer, e.g., abradable, cooperating member such as filled honeycomb, porous metal, friable ceramic or the like. In some of these arrangements, it has been found that inadequate sealing or seizing of the cooperating members can result. In other such arrangements, local "hot-spots" and burning of non-abrading members can result. Examples of seals utilizing an abradable member are disclosed in U. S. Patents 3,068,016; 3,481,715; 3,519,282; 3,817,719; 3,843,278; 3,918,925; 3,964,877; 3,975,165; 4,377,371 and 4,540,336. The abradable seal is adapted to flake off or abrade, when there is a thermal transient or shock loading causing the blade tip to strike the seal. USP 4,377,371 points out that certain materials used as abradable seals are vulnerable to large scale spalling propagated by the presence of cracks in the seal surface and discloses the glazing of the seal surface by the use of a laser beam to produce a fine micro-crack network in the seal surface. In a paper "Development of Improved-Durability Plasma Sprayed Ceramic Coatings for Gas Turbine Engines, presented by I. E. Sumner and D. Ruckle at the AIAA/SAE/ASME 16th Joint Propulsion Conference, AIAA-80-1193, segmented laser scanned coatings were reported to perform poorly.

British Patents 853314 and 1008526 disclose turbine or compressor blades formed with ribs on their tips for providing a seal with a rotor or stator shroud, the ribs or cooperating seal surface being removable when worn out. USP 4,148,494 discloses a gas turbine blade or vane having an abrasive tip comprising a electrodeposited matrix of nickel or an alloy containing nickel in which are entrapped abrasive particles, e.g., Borazon particles, protruding from the tip. Abrasive tips of the type described in this patent are difficult to produce and are extremely expensive. USP 3,339,933 discloses blade teeth coated with bonded alumina which expand into cooperating honeycomb members to form a seal. USP 3,537,713 discloses a rotating sleeve having inwardly projecting teeth coated with a hard protective material, such as a molybdenum or nickel aluminide, which displaces a rub-resistant material on a stationary cooperating member to form alternate ridges and grooves.

None of the above-mentioned prior art references disclose or suggest teeth, ribs or knife edges coated with a wear-resistant ceramic or metal carbide coating having laser-formed depressions for cutting into a sealing surface in forming a labyrinth seal.

By means of the present invention, the tips of turbine blades, compressor blades, fan blades, impellers, stator vanes, diffusers, shrouds, spoilers, spacers, and the like designed to cooperate with a sealing surface are provided with a wear-resistant ceramic or metallic carbide coating having laser-formed depressions providing a laser-engraved, wear-resistant, cutting surface capable of cutting into the sealing surface. In one specific

embodiment of the invention the tip is provided with one or more knife edges, teeth or ribs which are coated with the wear resistant, laser-engraved cutting surface of this invention and are designed to cut into the sealing surface to provide a labyrinth seal. The laser-engraved surface produced by this invention are wear- and corrosion-resistant and are capable of cutting into the cooperating sealing surface with minimal heat generation thus minimizing the risk of thermal warping and degeneration of physical properties of the member to which it is applied or to the cooperating sealing member.

The cutting capability of the laser-engraved surface is believed to be due to the elevated land areas which act as a collection of cutting edges. Further, the depressions between the land areas are believed to enhance cutting ability by receiving the fine cutting debris during cutting and releasing it when the turbine cools down and the tip retracts from the sealing surface.

Depending on how the laser is operated, the land areas can either be part of the original coating material or they can be built up above the original surface by material being melted, thrown up and recast around the edges of the depression. Recast material typically has a microstructure and properties which differ from that of the bulk coating. Reference is made hereinafter to photomicrographs which illustrate the metallurgical and/or topographical changes wrought on the surface of ceramic or metallic carbide coating in this invention where, for example, the appearance of a coated surface subsequent to laser treatment can be seen.

No prior art has been found to disclose the concept of the present invention which involves first bonding a ceramic or metallic carbide coating to the contact surface of a member designed to contact and cut into a co-operating member in the formation of a labyrinth seal and then laser-engraving a plurality of laser-formed depressions and resultant recast material around each depression to provide a uniform cutting surface on the contact surface.

The tip may be formed with at least one knife edge extending in the direction of travel of the tip relative to the second member, the surface of the knife edge having the coating bonded thereto and the plurality of laser-formed depressions in the surface of the coating. The coating bonded to the tip surface is usually a ceramic or metallic carbide surface.

The thickness of the coating before formation of the laser-formed depressions is preferably 0.0127 to 2.54 mm (0.5 to 100 mils), more preferably 0.0508 to 0.381 mm (2 to 15 mils).

The depth of the laser-formed depressions is preferably 2×10^{-3} to 0.2 mm (2 to 200 microns), more preferably 0.02 to 0.1 mm (20 to 100 microns).

The depressions may be formed in a random pattern having substantially uniform spacings between adjacent depressions. The screen of laser-formed depressions is preferably in the range of 31 to 315 depressions per centimetre (80 to 800 depressions per lineal inch), more preferably 39 to 157 depressions per centimetre (100 to 400 depressions per lineal inch).

Usually the laser-formed depressions occupy 50% to 90% of the surface and the land area between the depressions occupy the remaining 50% to 10% of the surface.

The present invention will now be further described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a fragmentary, sectional view showing a turbine blade having knife edges in contact with a sealing surface diagrammatically illustrating the relative positions under cold conditions for a new or rebuilt and unrun engine;

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary, diagrammatic, sectional view illustrating the relative positions of the blade tip with its knife edges and the sealing surface under contact conditions as the turbine is accelerated toward the design speed;

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary, sectional, diagrammatic view illustrating the relative positions of the turbine blade with its knife edge in relation to the sealing surface under design operating conditions;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary, sectional view showing the turbine blade shown in Figs. 1 to 3 diagrammatically illustrating the relative positions of the knife edges and sealing surface under cold conditions for an engine which has been run one or more times;

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary, sectional view showing a turbine blade having a tip in contact with a sealing surface diagrammatically illustrating the relative positions under cold conditions for a new or rebuilt and unrun engine;

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary, sectional view of the turbine blade given in Fig. 5 diagrammatically illustrating the relative positions of the blade tip and the sealing surface under contact conditions as the turbine is accelerated toward design speed;

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary, sectional view showing the turbine blade of Fig. 5 diagrammatically illustrating the relative positions of the turbine blade with its tip in relation to the sealing surface under design operating conditions;

Fig. 8 is a fragmentary, sectional view showing the turbine blade of Fig. 5 diagrammatically illustrating the

relative positions of the blade tip and sealing surface under cold conditions for a turbine which has been run one or more times;

Fig. 9 is a SEM photomicrograph at 120x magnification (Indium Replica) of a laser-engraved knife edge produced pursuant to the present invention showing the pattern of the cells depressions formed by the laser; and

Fig. 10 is a SEM micrograph at 560x magnification (Indium Replica) of an individual cell or depression in the laser-engraved knife edge.

Referring now to the drawings, Fig. 1 illustrates a turbine blade 10 having knife edges 11 on its tip. The turbine blade 10 is mounted on a rotor 12 and extends towards a stator 13. In the cold condition for a new, or rebuilt, and unrun engine as shown in Fig. 1, the knife edges 11 just clear the stator 13 whereas, as shown in Fig. 2, as the turbine accelerates to design speed the knife edges contact and cut into the stator 13. At design speed, as shown in Fig. 3, the knife edges recede somewhat from the grooves 14 which have been cut into the stator 13. Fig. 4 illustrates the relation of the knife edges 11 to the sealing surface 13 in a cold engine that has been run one or more times.

Fig. 5 illustrates a turbine blade 20 having a tip 21 wherein the turbine blade is mounted on a rotor 12 and extends towards stator 13. In the cold condition for a new, or rebuilt, and rerun engine as shown in Fig. 6, the tip 21 just clears the stator whereas, as shown in Fig. 6, as the turbine accelerates to design speed the tip 21 contacts and cuts into the stator 13. At design speed, as shown in Fig. 7, the tip recedes somewhat from groove 22 which have been cut into the stator 13 by the tip 21. Fig. 8 illustrates the relation of the tip 21 to the sealing surface 13 in a cold engine that has been run one or more times.

The surface of the knife edges 11 and the tip 21 are provided with ceramic or metallic carbide coatings 15 and 23, respectively, which are applied in the manner described hereinafter and laser-engraved to produce a pattern of laser formed depressions as described hereinafter. Any suitable ceramic coating or metallic carbide coating may be applied to the knife edge 11 or tip 21. For example, tungsten carbide and mixtures and/or alloys of tungsten carbide with cobalt, nickel, chromium, iron and mixtures of such metals can be employed. In addition, titanium carbide, tungsten-titanium carbide and chromium carbide are also useful. The above-mentioned carbides can be used separately or mixed or alloyed with cobalt, chromium, tungsten, nickel, iron or other suitable metals. The ceramic coatings include alumina, mixtures of alumina with titania, chromia, mixtures of chromia and alumina, zirconia mixed with magnesia and the like. Specifically, the following coating compositions made and sold by Union Carbide Corporation can be used to provide coatings 15 and 23:

LCIB a coating containing 65 wt. % chromium carbide (92 wt. % chromium, 8 wt. % carbon) and 35 wt. % nichrome (80 wt. % nickel and 20 wt. % chromium)

LCO-17 a coating containing 10 wt. % alumina and 90 wt. % of a cobalt alloy containing 54 wt. % Co, 25 wt. % Cr, 10 wt. % Ta, 7.5 wt. % Al, 0.8 wt. % Y, 0.7 wt. % Si and 2 wt. % C.

LW1N-40 a coating containing 82 wt. % W, 14 wt. % Co, and 4 wt. % C.

UCAR 24-K a coating of titanium nitride.

LZ-4B a mixture containing zirconia stabilized with magnesia containing 8 wt. % magnesia and 92 wt. % zirconia.

LTB-8 a coating of LZ-4B applied over a coating of LCO-35 applied over a coating of LCO-22.

The ceramic or metallic carbide coatings are applied to the metal surface of the knife edge 11 and tip 21 by a thermal spray process such as the detonation gun process or the plasma coating process. The detonation gun process is well known and fully described in USP 2,714,563, 4,173,685 and 4,519,840, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference, and involves feeding oxygen, acetylene and nitrogen into a gun barrel along with a charge of the material being coated, e.g., ceramic or metallic carbide or metallic powder. The gas mixture is then ignited and the resulting detonation wave accelerates the powder to about 73150 cm/sec (2400 ft./second) while heating it close to, or above, its melting point. The maximum free-burning temperature of oxygen-acetylene mixtures under constant pressure conditions occurs with about 45% acetylene and is about 3140°C. However, under conditions such as a detonation, where combustion occurs essentially at constant volume, the temperature probably exceeds 4200°C so that most materials can be melted by the process.

The gun barrel is aimed at the substrate and the powder at or near or above its melting point is deposited on the substrate. After such firing, the gun barrel is purged with nitrogen. This cycle is repeated about 4 to 8 times a second and each pulse of powder results in the deposition of a circle of coating of about 25 mm. in diameter and a few microns thick. The total coating is produced by many overlapping circles of coatings, each of which is composed of many overlapping, thin, lenticular particles or splats corresponding to the individual powder particles. The overlapping circles are closely controlled to produce a relatively smooth coating.

The plasma technique for coating the knife edges is conventionally practiced and is described in USP 3,016,447, 3,914,573, 3,958,097, 4,173,685 and 4,519,840, the disclosures of all of which are incorporated

herein by reference. In the plasma coating technique, a plasma torch having a copper anode and tungsten cathode is usually used. A gas such as argon or nitrogen or a mixture of these with hydrogen or helium is caused to flow around the cathode and through the anode which serves as a constricting nozzle. A direct current arc, usually initiated with a high frequency discharge, is maintained between the electrodes. The arc current and voltage used vary with the anode/cathode design, gas flow and gas composition. The power used varies from about 5 to 80 kilowatts depending on the type of torch and the operating parameters.

A gas plasma is generated by the arc and contains free electrons, ionized atoms and some neutral atoms and unassociated diatomic molecules when nitrogen or hydrogen are used. Plasma gas velocities with most conventional torches are subsonic but supersonic velocities can be generated using converging or diverging nozzles with critical exit angles. The temperature of the plasma may exceed 27760°C (50,000°F). A ceramic coating powder or a metallic carbide coating powder is introduced into the plasma stream. The coating powder melts in the plasma and is caused to impinge upon the substrate. The plasma process of coating utilizes much higher temperatures than the detonation gun (or D-gun) process and also is a continuous process whereas the D-gun process is intermittent and non-continuous.

The thickness of the coating 15 or 23 applied by either the plasma process or D-gun process can preferably range from 0.0127 to 2.54mm (0.5 to 100 mils) more preferably 0.0508 to 0.381 mm (2 to 15 mils).

Following deposition of the coating on the knife edge or other cutting surface, the resulting ceramic or metallic carbide coating bonded to the surface of the knife edge may be ground with a diamond grinding wheel to provide a more even surface for application of the laser-engraved patterns hereinafter described. Other than for dimensional control of the coated surface, a grinding step would not usually be required for the parts described herein.

The ceramic or metallic carbide coating is laser-engraved using a pulsed laser of a gas type such as CO₂ or solid state type such as YAG in order to produce a suitable pattern and depth of laser-formed depressions and land areas on the coating surface. The depths of the laser-formed depressions, as measured from the bottom of the depression to the top of the land surrounding it, can vary from a few microns or less to as much as 0.12 or 0.14 mm (120 or 140 microns) or more, e.g. 2×10^{-3} to 0.2 mm (2 to 200 microns), preferably 0.02 to 0.1 mm (20 to 100 microns). The average diameter can vary from 0.0254 to 0.3048 (1.0 to 12 mils), preferably from 0.0635 to 0.254 mm (2.5 to 10 mils). The average diameter and depth of each depression is controlled by the energy content and pulse length of the laser pulse. The spacing between laser-formed depressions is controlled by the firing rate of the laser and the amount of relative motion between the laser beam and the coated surface. The number of laser-formed depressions per lineal inch extends preferably from 80 to 800, more preferably 100 to 400, that is preferably 31 to 315 depressions per centimetre, more preferably 39 to 157 depressions per centimetre.

A wide variety of laser machines are available for forming depressions in the ceramic or metallic carbide coating. In general, lasers are available that provide an extremely large range of joules per pulse, pulse times and operating frequencies. Thus, there is no problem in choosing an appropriate laser and operating conditions to produce the surface topography herein described.

As best seen in Figs. 9 and 10, the surface of the ceramic or metallic carbide coating after laser-engraving comprises a series of land areas and depressions in the form of microcavities or cells formed by (a) vaporization of some material and in some cases (b) the melting, moving and recasting of additional material when the coating is hit by the laser pulse. Where recast material is present it has been found to differ considerably from the original coating. In general, it is denser and less porous than the original material, and may have a different atomic structure, e.g., alumina-titania mixtures, which as coated appear in separate phases but on recasting by laser treatment form a single phase material. It is believed that the land area, whether it be the original coating material or recast material, formed in ridges around each depression presents minute cutting edges which cut into the abradable material or honeycomb structure bonded to the surface of stator 13. The thickness of the recast material as measured from the surface of the virgin coating can be 10% to 40% of the total depression depth, preferably 20% to 30%.

The depressions occupy from 10% to 90% of the surface area and preferably from 50% to 90%. The corresponding preferred land area is 10% to 50%.

It can also be observed from Fig. 9 that the depressions are provided in a random pattern in the ceramic or metallic carbide coating. The average center to center distance between depressions is substantially constant.

The following illustrative Example is presented. The following abbreviations and designations are used in the Example and elsewhere herein:

D-gun Coating Method

a detonation gun method of applying a ceramic or metallic carbide coating to a substrate in which the ceramic or metallic carbide powder is charged to a gun barrel with nitrogen, oxygen and acetylene which is detonated to produce a temperature

of about 6000°F which melts the ceramic or metallic carbide powder and propels it against the substrate.

Plasma Coating Method

a technique for continuously applying a ceramic or metallic carbide coating to a substrate by injecting the ceramic or metallic carbide powder into a plasma of ionized gas formed by establishing an electric arc across a stream of inert gas, specifically argon. A ceramic or metallic carbide powder is continuously fed to the plasma which may be operating at a temperature as high as 27780°C (50,000°F). The powder is heated and accelerated with the expanding gases in the plasma and is directed against the substrate where the powder cools, congeals and bonds to the substrate.

Screen Size

LWIN-40

average number of depressions per lineal inch.

a coating containing 82 wt. % W, 14 wt. % Co, and 4 wt. % C.

EXAMPLE 1

Eight knife edge seal specimens representing the rotary member of a rotary labyrinth seal were prepared for coating by grit-blasting the knife edges with 60 mesh Al_2O_3 fed at 0.95 kg/mm (2.1 pounds per minute) under a pressure of 103 kPa (15 psi) through a pressure blast unit utilizing a 0.635 cm (1/4 inch) i.d. Al_2O_3 nozzle aimed at the bevelled edge of the knife edge at a 5 inch standoff for a total of about 32 seconds. The grit-blasted surface of the knife edge had a roughness of 105 R_a . The knife edge specimens were coated with LW-IN40 by the use of a detonation gun operating with a gas composition of 28% acetylene, 28% oxygen and 44% nitrogen, a gas flow rate of 11 cubic ft. per minute and a powder feed rate of 54 grams per minute to provide a coating thickness of 0.0127 to 0.0203 cm (0.005" to 0.008").

Six of the coated knife edge seal specimens were further processed by laser engraving on both sides such that the laser beam was perpendicular to the knife edge surface on which it was operating under such conditions as would provide a diameter of the laser formed depressions ranging between 0.0254 and 0.0152 cm (0.010 and 0.006") which is the equivalent of a screen size of 100 to 140, respectively. In addition, the laser-engraving was carried out under such conditions designed to provide a depression depth of 1.27 to 1.78 mm (50 to 70 microns). The laser was operated at a power of 59 watts, a pulse duration of 145 microseconds at a frequency of 1000 Hertz. The energy content per pulse was approximately 0.059 Joules. The depressions formed were 50 micrometers deep and had a screen which averaged 51 depressions per centimetre (130 depressions per lineal inch). Hence, the average diameter of the depressions is 0.0196 cm (0.0077 inch) (1/130). Thus, in this case the depressions occupy approximately 79% of the surface area and the land area occupies the remaining 21%.

After engraving, the knife edges were subjected to macro and micro structural analysis, metallographically and on the scanning electron microscope (SEM), in order to determine the actual depression depth and diameter, the presence or absence of recast material and the overall condition of the engraving. The average depression depth from the virgin coating surface to the bottom of the depression was found to be 45.6 micrometers while the average depth of the depressions from the top of the recast material to the bottom of the depression was found to be 73.6 micrometers. The average thickness of the recast material was measured as 23.8 micrometers. A Zeiss metallograph was used in making the depth and thickness measurements.

Fig. 9 is a photomicrograph of the resulting laser-engraved knife edge specimen of this Example at a magnification of 120x (indium replica). Fig. 9 shows the substantially uniform distribution of laser-formed depressions and the presence of recast material around each depression. In addition, Fig. 9 shows the virgin coating between the individual rows of depressions. Fig. 10 shows the morphology of an individual depression at a magnification of 560x (indium replica) showing recast material around the laser-engraved depression and the virgin coating around the recast material.

The six laser engraved knife edge specimens were tested at ambient temperature conditions. In this test the knife edge is rotated with an edge velocity of 28956 cm/sec (950 ft./sec) and moves into an arcuate sealing surface at a rate of 5.08×10^{-3} cm/sec (0.002" per second) thereby cutting a 0.1524 cm (0.06" groove) in the arcuate sealing surface specimen during a thirty second test or a 0.0762 cm (0.030") groove during a fifteen second test.

Claims

1. A rotary gas seal which comprises a first member including at least one seal tooth having a tip which co-operates with a second member to inhibit gas flow therebetween, the tip being provided with a ceramic or

of about 6000°F which melts the ceramic or metallic carbide powder and propels it against the substrate.

Plasma Coating Method

a technique for continuously applying a ceramic or metallic carbide coating to a substrate by injecting the ceramic or metallic carbide powder into a plasma of ionized gas formed by establishing an electric arc across a stream of inert gas, specifically argon. A ceramic or metallic carbide powder is continuously fed to the plasma which may be operating at a temperature as high as 27760°C (50,000°F). The powder is heated and accelerated with the expanding gases in the plasma and is directed against the substrate where the powder cools, congeals and bonds to the substrate.

Screen Size

average number of depressions per lineal inch.

LWIN-40

a coating containing 82 wt. % W, 14 wt. % Co, and 4 wt. % C.

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Six of the coated knife edge seal specimens were further processed by laser engraving on both sides such that the laser beam was perpendicular to the knife edge surface on which it was operating under such conditions as would provide a diameter of the laser formed depressions ranging between 0.0254 and 0.0152 cm (0.010 and 0.006") which is the equivalent of a screen size of 100 to 140, respectively. In addition, the laser-engraving was carried out under such conditions designed to provide a depression depth of 1.27 to 1.78 mm (50 to 70 microns). The laser was operated at a power of 59 watts, a pulse duration of 145 microseconds at a frequency of 1000 Hertz. The energy content per pulse was approximately 0.059 Joules. The depressions formed were 50 micrometers deep and had a screen which averaged 51 depressions per centimetre (130 depressions per lineal inch). Hence, the average diameter of the depressions is 0.0196 cm (0.0077 inch) (1/130). Thus, in this case the depressions occupy approximately 79% of the surface area and the land area occupies the remaining 21%.

After engraving, the knife edges were subjected to macro and micro structural analysis, metallographically and on the scanning electron microscope (SEM), in order to determine the actual depression depth and diameter, the presence or absence of recast material and the overall condition of the engraving. The average depression depth from the virgin coating surface to the bottom of the depression was found to be 45.6 micrometers while the average depth of the depressions from the top of the recast material to the bottom of the depression was found to be 73.6 micrometers. The average thickness of the recast material was measured as 23.8 micrometers. A Zeiss metallograph was used in making the depth and thickness measurements.

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Claims

1. A rotary gas seal which comprises a first member including at least one seal tooth having a tip which co-operates with a second member to inhibit gas flow therebetween, the tip being provided with a ceramic or



metallic carbide coating bonded thereto, characterized in that the surface of the coating has a plurality of laser-formed depressions and provides a wear-resistant, cutting surface capable of cutting into the second member.

2. A turbine or compressor blade which comprises a tip surface adapted to co-operate with a sealing surface to form a seal between the blade and the sealing surface and a ceramic or metallic carbide coating bonded to the tip surface, characterized in that the coating has a plurality of laser-formed depressions and provides a wear-resistant, cutting surface capable of cutting into the sealing surface.

3. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the tip is formed with at least one knife edge extending in the direction of travel of the tip relative to the second member, the surface of the knife edge having the coating bonded thereto and the plurality of laser-formed depressions in the surface of the coating.

4. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the coating bonded to the tip surface is a ceramic or metallic carbide coating.

5. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the thickness of the coating before formation of the laser-formed depressions is 0.0127 to 2.54 mm (0.5 to 15 mils).

6. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the depth of the laser-formed depressions is in the range of 2×10^{-3} to 0.2 mm (2 to 200 microns).

7. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to claim 6, wherein the depth of the laser-formed depressions is in the range of 0.02 to 0.1 mm (20 to 100 microns).

8. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the depressions are formed in a random pattern having substantially uniform spacings between adjacent depressions.

9. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the screen of the laser-formed depressions is in the range of 31 to 315 depressions per centimetre (80 to 80 depressions per lineal inch).

10. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to claim 9, wherein the screen of the laser-formed depressions is in the range of 39 to 157 depressions per centimetre (100 to 400 depressions per lineal inch).

11. A seal or a turbine or compressor blade according to any of claims 1 to 10, wherein the laser-formed depressions occupy 50% to 90% of the surface and the land area between the depressions occupy the remaining 50% to 10% of the surface.

Revendications

1. Joint tournant d'étanchéité aux gaz qui comporte un premier élément comprenant au moins une dent d'étanchéité ayant un bout qui coopère avec un second élément pour empêcher un écoulement de gaz entre eux, le bout étant pourvu d'un revêtement de céramique ou de carbure métallique qui lui est lié, caractérisé en ce que la surface du revêtement présente plusieurs creux formés au laser et constitue une surface de coupe, résistant à l'usure, capable d'entailler le second élément.

2. Aube de turbine ou de compresseur qui comporte une surface de bout conçue pour coopérer avec une surface d'étanchéité afin de former un joint étanche entre l'aube et la surface d'étanchéité et un revêtement de céramique ou de carbure métallique lié à la surface du bout, caractérisée en ce que le revêtement présente plusieurs creux formés au laser et constitue une surface de coupe, résistant à l'usure, capable d'entailler la surface d'étanchéité.

3. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel le bout est formé de manière à comporter au moins une arête s'étendant dans la direction du déplacement du bout par rapport au second élément, la surface de l'arête ayant le revêtement qui lui est lié et les divers creux formés par laser dans la surface du revêtement.

4. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, dans lequel le revêtement lié à la surface du bout est un revêtement de céramique ou de carbure métallique.

5. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 4, dans lequel l'épaisseur du revêtement avant la formation des creux formés au laser est de 0,0127 à 2,54 mm (0,5 à 100 mils).

6. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 5, dans lequel la profondeur des creux formés au laser est comprise dans la plage de 2×10^{-3} à 0,2 mm (2 à 200 micromètres).

7. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon la revendication 6, dans lequel la profondeur des creux formés au laser est dans la plage de 0,02 à 0,1 mm (20 à 100 micromètres).



8. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 7, dans lequel les creux sont formés en une configuration aléatoire ayant des espacements sensiblement uniformes entre des creux adjacents.

9. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 8, dans lequel la trame des creux formés au laser est dans la plage de 31 à 315 creux par centimètre (80 à 800 creux par inch linéaire).

10. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon la revendication 9, dans lequel la trame des creux formés au laser est dans la plage de 39 à 157 creux par centimètre (100 à 400 creux par inch linéaire).

11. Joint d'étanchéité ou aube de turbine ou de compresseur selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 10, dans lequel les creux formés au laser occupent 50% à 90% de la surface et les plats entre les creux occupent les 50% à 10% restants de la surface.

Patentansprüche

1. Rotationsgasdichtung mit einem ersten Bauteil, das mindestens einen Dichtungs Zahn mit einer Spitze aufweist, die mit einem zweiten Bauteil zusammenwirkt, um einen Gasfluß zwischen den Bauteilen zu verhindern, wobei die Spitze mit einem damit verbundenen Keramik- oder Metallkarbidüberzug versehen ist, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Oberfläche des Überzuges eine Mehrzahl von durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen aufweist und eine verschleißbeständige Schneidfläche bildet, die in das zweite Bauteil einschneiden kann.

2. Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel mit einer Spitzenfläche, die mit einer Dichtfläche unter Bildung einer Dichtung zwischen der Schaufel und der Dichtfläche zusammenwirken kann, und mit einem mit der Spitzenfläche verbundenen Keramik- oder Metallkarbidüberzug, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß der Überzug eine Mehrzahl von durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen aufweist und eine verschleißbeständige Schneidfläche bildet, die in die Dichtfläche einschneiden kann.

3. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei die Spitze mit mindestens einer Schneidkante versehen ist, die sich in der Laufrichtung der Spitze mit Bezug auf das zweite Bauteil erstreckt, und wobei der Überzug mit der Oberfläche der Schneidkante verbunden ist sowie die Mehrzahl von durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen in der Oberfläche des Überzuges vorgesehen ist.

4. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, wobei der mit der Spitzenfläche verbundene Überzug ein Keramik- oder Metallkarbidüberzug ist.

5. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 4, wobei die Dicke des Überzuges vor der Ausbildung der durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen 0,0127 bis 2,54 mm (0,5 bis 100 mils) beträgt.

6. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, wobei die Tiefe der durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen im Bereich von 2×10^{-3} bis 0,2 mm (2 bis 200 μm) liegt.

7. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach Anspruch 6, wobei die Tiefe der durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen im Bereich von 0,02 bis 0,1 mm (20 bis 100 μm) liegt.

8. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 7, wobei die Vertiefungen entsprechend einem willkürlichen Muster ausgebildet sind, bei dem im wesentlichen gleichförmige Abstände zwischen benachbarten Vertiefungen vorliegen.

9. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 8, wobei 31 bis 315 durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildete Vertiefungen pro Zentimeter (80 bis 800 Vertiefungen pro lineal inch) vorgesehen sind.

10. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach Anspruch 9, wobei 39 bis 157 durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildete Vertiefungen pro Zentimeter (100 bis 400 Vertiefungen je lineal inch) vorgesehen sind.

11. Dichtung oder Turbinen- oder Verdichterschaufel nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 10, wobei die durch Laserbearbeitung ausgebildeten Vertiefungen 50 % bis 90 % der Oberfläche einnehmen und der Stegbereich zwischen den Vertiefungen die verbleibenden 50 % bis 10 % der Oberfläche einnimmt.

