

Wearable Programming Unit For Deploying Air Burst Munition

Field of Invention

[001] The present invention relates to low velocity projectiles such as air burst munitions and associated wearable programming unit. The wearable programming unit allows more rapid or intuitive deployment of these air burst munitions.

Background

[002] With advances in mobile computing, law enforcement and military personnel now carry advanced electronic aids. For example, US published document 2016/0091282 by Baker, et. al. describes a mobile ballistics processing and targeting display system. This system stores ballistic data of a plurality of bullets, receives input from other connected electronic devices (such as a laser rangefinder, compass and GPS), receives atmospheric data (such as wind speed, wind direction, temperature, pressure and relative humidity), and displays real-time map of the surroundings; the system thus allows a user to identify one's location on the map; results of computation is displayed as a graphical representation of in-flight bullet characteristics. It appears that this mobile ballistic system adds a lot of weight and bulk to a rifle carried by the law enforcement or military personnel.

[003] In another approach, US Patent No. 7,089,845, assigned to Chartered Ammunition Industries, describes an airburst infantry weapon employing a fire control device F, which includes an image visualization unit V, an angle measuring unit Y, a laser distance measuring unit L and a data processor EDV. A three-stage aiming process is described, namely, a rough aiming where a deployment distance is approximated; an actual aiming where the data processor determines a target marker position on the image visualization unit; and a fine aiming where the rifle is moved so that the target marker coincides with the target image.

[004] In reality, the method described in US Patent No. 7,089,845 does not allow sufficient rapid aiming and firing, whilst the rifle in US 2016/0091282 may be too heavy to move during fine aiming. It can thus be seen that there exists a need for a new system to improve intuitive deployment and accuracy of air burst munitions.

Summary

[005] The following presents a simplified summary to provide a basic understanding of the present invention. This summary is not an extensive overview of the invention, and is not intended to identify key features of the invention. Rather, it is to present some of the inventive concepts of this invention in a generalised form as a prelude to the detailed description that is to follow.

[006] The present invention seeks to provide a new system for rapid and intuitive deployment of air burst munitions. Targeting accuracy is also sought.

[007] In one embodiment, the present invention provides a wearable programming unit associated with deploying of air burst munitions (ABM) comprising: a memory unit for storing characteristics of a plurality of ABMs from a rifle; a ballistic processor associated with the plurality of ABMs and the rifle; a display unit for displaying identity of a selected ABM; two-channel wireless communication with the selected ABM and a sighting unit disposed on the rifle; and a vibrator; wherein, when an ABM is identified and a deployment distance D is entered, the ballistic processor computes and outputs both a time of burst T and a barrel angle α , with the barrel angle output is visible as a target marker in the sighting unit, so that when a user tilts and/or moves the rifle to bring a centre of the sighting unit to coincide with the target marker, the wearable programming unit responds by activating the vibrator as a signal to the user to trigger the rifle so that the ABM is propelled to the target with intended effects.

[008] In another embodiment, the present invention provides a method for enabling intuitive aiming of a rifle and deploying an air burst munition (ABM) from the rifle, the method comprising: wearing a programming unit on a user, with the programming unit within wireless communication range with both an associated rifle and a selected ABM; loading the selected ABM into the rifle; a ballistic processor located in the programming unit detecting and identifying the loaded ABM, and the ballistic processor responding by outputting a time of burst and a required barrel angle; a sighting unit receiving the required barrel angle and displays this requirement as a visual target marker; and when the user tilts

and/or moves the rifle to bring a centre of sighting unit to coincide with the target marker, an angle measuring unit located at the sighting unit outputs a signal to the ballistic processor and the programming unit is activated to vibrate as a signal for the user to trigger the rifle, so that the ABM is propelled to the target with intended results.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0009] This invention will be described by way of non-limiting embodiments of the present invention, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0010] FIG. 1A illustrates a wearable programming system for deploying air burst munitions according to an embodiment of the present invention; FIG. 1B illustrates a target market seen through a sight of a weapon; and

[0011] FIG. 2A illustrates a wearable programming unit according to another embodiment of the present invention; and FIG. 2B illustrates a wearable programming unit according to yet another embodiment.

Detailed Description

[0012] One or more specific and alternative embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the attached drawings. It shall be apparent to one skilled in the art, however, that this invention may be practised without such specific details. Some of the details may not be described at length so as not to obscure the invention. For ease of reference, common reference numerals or series of numerals will be used throughout the figures when referring to the same or similar features common to the figures.

[0013] FIG. 1A shows a wearable programming system 100 for deploying air burst munitions (ABMs) 10 from a rifle 20. The programming system 100 includes a wearable programming unit 110 in wireless communication with a sighting unit 104 disposed on the rifle 20. The sighting unit 104 includes a view port 106, an angle measuring unit 107 and a wireless communication unit 108. In FIG. 1A, the wearable programming unit 110 is worn on a wrist according to one embodiment. The wearable programming unit 110 includes a

ballistic processor 112, a memory unit 114, a wireless communication unit 120, a vibrator 130, a display unit 140, a mode button 150 and input/select up/down buttons 160, 161.

[0014] The memory unit 114 contains characteristics of a plurality of ABMs 10 including their ballistic data. The type of ABM 10 to be deployed from the rifle 20 is selected through the input/select up/down buttons 160,161, for example, by scrolling up or down a list and pressing a select button. The user then assesses a deployment distance D for the selected ABM; the deployment distance D can be estimated visually or with an aid of a laser rangefinder (not shown in the figure). The deployment distance D is entered into the wearable programming unit 110, for example, by also scrolling up or down a predefined list and pressing the select button. In response, the ballistic processor 112 computes a time of burst T and a barrel angle alpha of the rifle 20. The required barrel angle alpha is then transmitted by the wireless communication unit 120 to the sighting wireless communication unit 108 and this result is visually seen by the user as a target marker 109 in the sighting view port 106. The user responds by tilting and/or moving the rifle 20 so that a cross-hairline in a centre of the view port 106 coincides with the target marker 109. Once the cross-hairline coincides with the target marker 109, the angle measuring unit 107 feedbacks aiming of the rifle 20 to the wearable programming unit 110. The wearable programming unit 110 responds by activating the vibrator 130 to signal or prompts the user to trigger the rifle 20 for an ABM 10 to be propelled out from the barrel. As the ABM 10 exits out of the barrel, the wearable programming unit 110 transmits data containing the time of burst T to the ABM so as to achieve desired results intended by the user. With the present invention, the user uses both vibration and visual senses to aim and to fire the ABMs to the desired target. This invention is helpful during a critical moment when the user may cast an eye on the target and thus has to rely on the vibration sensing to trigger the rifle 20. This invention therefore provides more intuition for the user in deploying ABMs; as a result, the time taken to aim and to trigger the rifle is shorter than that when using a conventional rifle; at the same time, the user can visually monitor movement of the target continually and yet maintaining aim on the target, thereby allowing accuracy of deploying ABMs exceeding that when a conventional rifle is used.

[0015] In the above setting of the ABM, the mode button 150 allows the user to toggle ON/OFF impact mode of each ABM. By default, the impact mode is turned ON; this

impact mode is very effective when the ABM is equipped with Applicant's electro-mechanical impact sensing disclosed in US Patent No. 9,163,916. Even when impact mode is turned ON, the ABM is still effective in a burst mode (while the ABM is still airborne). In another embodiment, the mode button 150 may be configured to toggle between impact and input modes, with the up/down buttons for selection and changing the mode button 150 to automatically enter a selection; in other words, this will dispense away with many dedicated input buttons.

[0016] In the above wireless communication between the wearable programming unit 110 and the sighting unit 104 or between the wearable programming unit 110 and the ABM 10, two-channel communication is facilitated; in other words, there is handshaking or feedback from the receptor to the transmitter; this is to ensure security and integrity of wireless transmission. In another embodiment, such wireless communication is via paired Bluetooth communication and the hopping frequency and proximity both provide added security. Alternatively, other mid-range wireless communication operable at 13.56 MHz is also possible.

[0017] The above wearable programming unit 110 has been described as worn on a wrist of the user. In another embodiment, it is possible that a wearable programming unit 110a is configured as an attachable unit to a strap of a smart watch, for example as shown in FIG. 2A. This wearable programming unit 110a may then have an additional wireless communication channel with the smart watch, for example, by making use of the display and mode/input/select buttons that are already on the smart watch.

[0018] In another embodiment, a wearable programming unit 110b is configured as an attachable unit onto a safety vest of a user. This wearable programming unit 110b may be worn on a shoulder portion of the safety vest, as shown in FIG. 2B. Preferably, this wearable programming unit 110b may include a voice input function, for example, to enter a deployment distance D of an ABM 10.

[0019] While specific embodiments have been described and illustrated, it is understood that many changes, modifications, variations and combinations thereof could be made to the present invention without departing from the scope of the invention.

CLAIMS:

1. A wearable programming unit (110) associated with deploying of air burst munitions (ABM) (10), said wearable programming unit (110) comprising:

a memory unit (114) for storing characteristics of a plurality of ABMs from a rifle (20); wherein the rifle (20) is disposed with a sighting unit (104) comprising a view port (106), an angle measuring unit (107) and a sighting wireless communication unit (108);

input/select up/down buttons (160, 161) for selecting a type of ABMs to be deployed from the rifle (20) by a user;

a ballistic processor (112) for computing a time of burst T and a barrel angle alpha of the rifle (20); wherein the barrel angle alpha is transmitted by a wireless communication unit 120 to the sighting wireless communication unit 108 and this result is visually seen by the user as a target marker (109) in the view port (106);

a display unit (140) for displaying identity of a selected ABM;

the wireless communication unit (120) for two-channel wireless communication with the selected ABM and the sighting wireless communication unit (108) of the sighting unit (104); and

a vibrator (130) for being activated to signal or prompt the user to trigger the rifle (20) when a cross-hairline in a center of the view port (106) coincides with the target marker (109), the angle measuring unit (107) feedbacks aiming of the rifle (20) to the wearable programming unit (110);

wherein, when an ABM is identified and a deployment distance D is entered, the ballistic processor (112) computes and outputs both the time of burst T and the barrel angle alpha, with the barrel angle output is visible as the target marker in the view port (106) of the sighting unit (104), so that when the user tilts and/or moves the rifle to bring a centre of the sighting unit to coincide with the target marker, the wearable programming unit (110) responds by activating the vibrator as a signal to the user to trigger the rifle so that the ABM is propelled to the target with intended effects; and

wherein, as the ABM (10) exits out of the barrel, the wireless communication unit (120) transmits data containing the time of burst T to the ABM so as to achieve desired results intended by the user.

2. The wearable programming unit according to claim 1, further comprising an impact mode toggle button to selectively turn OFF a default impact mode.

3. The wearable programming unit according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the wireless communication conforms to a Bluetooth protocol.
4. The wearable programming unit according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the wireless communication is transmitted at 13.56 MHz.
5. The wearable programming unit according to any one of the preceding claims is wearable on a wrist of the user.
6. The wearable programming unit according to claim 5, wherein the programming unit is an attachment onto a strap of a smart wrist watch.
7. The wearable programming unit according to claim 6, further comprising a wireless communication channel between the programming unit and the smart wrist watch, and the mode according to claim 2 and the up/down buttons are those located on the smart wrist watch.
8. The wearable programming unit according to any one of claims 1-4 is wearable on a security vest of the user.
9. The wearable programming unit according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a voice input for entering the deployment distance D of the selected ABM.
10. A method for enabling intuitive aiming of a rifle and deploying an air burst munition (ABM) from the rifle, the method comprising:
 - wearing a programming unit of claims 1-9 on a user, with the programming unit within wireless communication range with both the rifle and the selected ABM;
 - loading the selected ABM into the rifle;
 - the ballistic processor located in the programming unit detecting and identifying the loaded ABM, and the ballistic processor responding by outputting the time of burst and the required barrel angle;
 - the sighting unit receiving the required barrel angle and displays this requirement as the visual target marker; and

when the user tilts and/or moves the rifle to bring the centre of sighting unit to coincide with the target marker, the angle measuring unit located at the sighting unit outputs the signal to the ballistic processor and the programming unit is activated to vibrate as the signal for the user to trigger the rifle, so that the ABM is propelled to the target with intended results.