

ABSTRACT:**"A method and apparatus for measuring flying height"**

A method and apparatus for measuring the flying height of a slider above a disk surface and in-situ monitoring the slider disk interface comprising the steps of: providing a beam of light; providing a slider disk interface comprising a disk having a substantially transparent substrate and a thin film layer, a slider for carrying a read/write element, the slider having a reflective surface; and an air bearing having a thickness d_3 for supporting the slider above the disk; directing the beam of light to the slider disk interface through the disk, the thin film layer, the air bearing and then to the reflective surface of the slider; and measuring one of the intensity and phase information of the light reflected from the slider disk interface to provide an indication of the thickness d_3 of the air bearing and/or of the thin film layer.

[FIGURE 4]