

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
1 June 2006 (01.06.2006)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2006/057660 A3

(51) International Patent Classification:

H01S 3/11 (2006.01) *H01S 3/117* (2006.01)
H01S 3/115 (2006.01) *H01S 3/00* (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/US2005/012517

(22) International Filing Date: 13 April 2005 (13.04.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:

10/997,586 24 November 2004 (24.11.2004) US

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

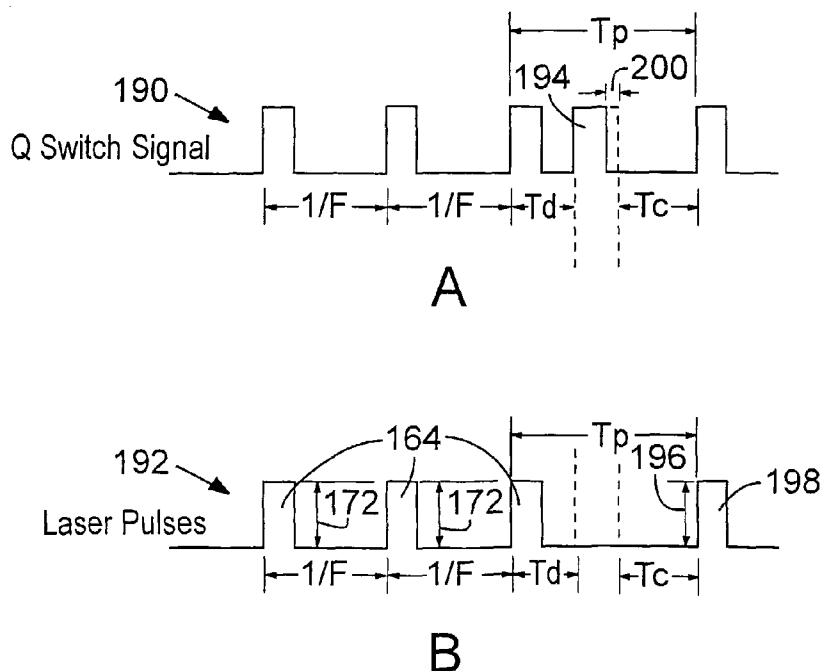
(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: HIGH ENERGY PULSE SUPPRESSION METHOD



(57) Abstract: A laser (126) processes a workpiece (120) with laser pulses (192) delivered at random time intervals and at substantially constant energy levels by characterizing the laser cavity discharge behavior and utilizing that information for adjusting dummy pulse time periods to compensate for the energy errors. Dummy pulses (194) are laser pulses that are blocked from reaching a workpiece. A second way for providing constant pulse energies employs an AOM (10) for varying amounts of laser energy passed to the workpiece. A third way of providing constant pulse energies entails extending the pulse period (200) of selected pulses to allow additional laser cavity charging time whenever a dummy pulse is initiated.

WO 2006/057660 A3



(88) Date of publication of the international search report:

3 May 2007

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