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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **SELF ENERGISING COUPLING COMPANY LIMITED** [GB/GB]; Swan House, New Cheshire Business Park, Wincham Lane, Wincham, Northwich Cheshire CW9 6GG (GB).

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **READMAN, Matt** [GB/GB]; Self Energising Coupling Company Limited, Swan House, New Cheshire Business Park, Wincham Lane, Wincham Northwich Cheshire CW9 6GG (GB).

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(54) Title: LATCH MECHANISM

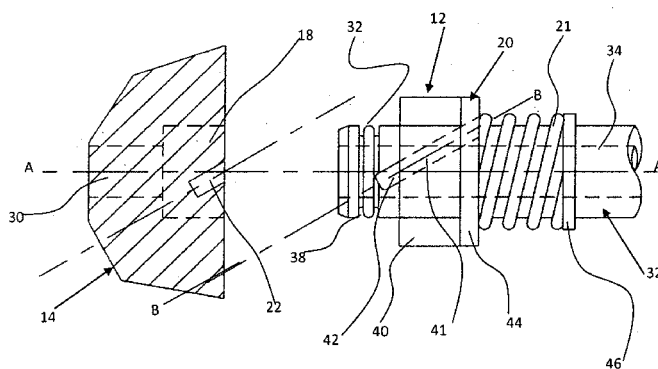


FIG. 2

(57) Abstract: A latch mechanism (10) comprises a male coupling member (12), and a female coupling member (14). The latch mechanism (10) is coupled/de-coupled by inserting/withdrawing male coupling member from female coupling member, by movement in a first direction A-A. A latch (20), here comprising a plate (44) and two prongs (42), is slidably mounted on the male coupling member (12), for movement in a second direction B-B. A compression spring (21) biases the latch (20) so that the prongs (42) are exposed at the distal end of the male coupling member (12). Catch channels shown here as two holes (22) that extend in the second direction B-B for receiving the prongs (42) are formed in the female coupling member. In use, the latch mechanism (10) is coupled by relative movement in the first direction between the male and female coupling members. When the probe is fully inserted, the prongs of the latch are aligned with the holes (22). Consequently, due to the bias of the spring (21), the prongs (42) enter the holes (22). Because the second direction is inclined to the first direction, when in the mated position, de-coupling of the latch mechanism by relative movement in the first direction A-A is prevented by engagement between the prongs (42) and the holes (22).