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(54) Title: LOAD BEARING APPARATUS AND METHOD

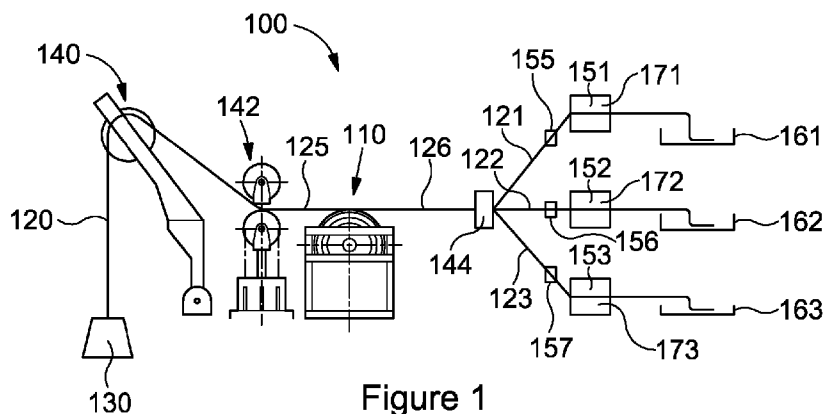


Figure 1

(57) **Abstract:** A load-bearing apparatus (100) comprises a winch apparatus (110), and a load-bearing spoolable medium (120) for connecting to a load, the load-bearing spoolable medium comprising a plurality of load-bearing elements (121-123); wherein at least a portion of the load-bearing spoolable medium is spooled about the winch apparatus. The provision of multiple load-bearing elements may help reduce the diameter appropriate for the winch apparatus, while maintaining the necessary load bearing capacity for supporting, paying in and/or paying out the load. The load-bearing apparatus may comprise a tension control apparatus (151-153) for controlling, applying and/or adjusting the tension of the load-bearing spoolable medium.