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Behdad et al.

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(54) **2-BIT PHASE QUANTIZATION WAVEGUIDE**

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H01P 1/165 (2006.01)
H01Q 21/00 (2006.01)
H01Q 1/50 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***H01P 3/123*** (2013.01); ***H01P 1/165*** (2013.01); ***H01Q 1/50*** (2013.01); ***H01Q 21/0006*** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC H01P 3/123; H01P 1/165; H01Q 1/50; H01Q 21/006
USPC .... 333/21 A
See application file for complete search history.

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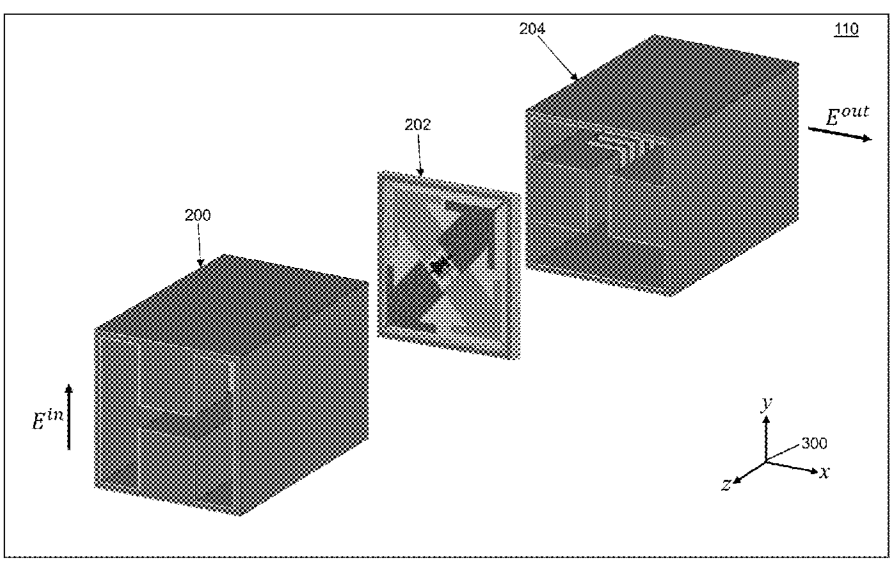
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A waveguide includes a first double-ridge waveguide, a second double-ridge waveguide, and a polarization rotator. The first double-ridge waveguide provides a phase of an input electrical field rotated 0° or 90°. The second double-ridge outputs an electric field with a polarization that is perpendicular to a first polarization of the input electrical field. The polarization rotator is mounted between the first double-ridge waveguide and the second double-ridge waveguide and includes a frame, a dielectric layer, a first conducting pattern layer forming a first conductor and a second conductor, a first switch connected between the first conductor and the second conductor, a second conducting pattern layer forming a third conductor and a fourth conductor, and a second switch connected between the third conductor and the fourth conductor. Wherein a phase rotation of 90° or −90° is provided by the polarization rotator based on a state of the first and second switch.

20 Claims, 17 Drawing Sheets



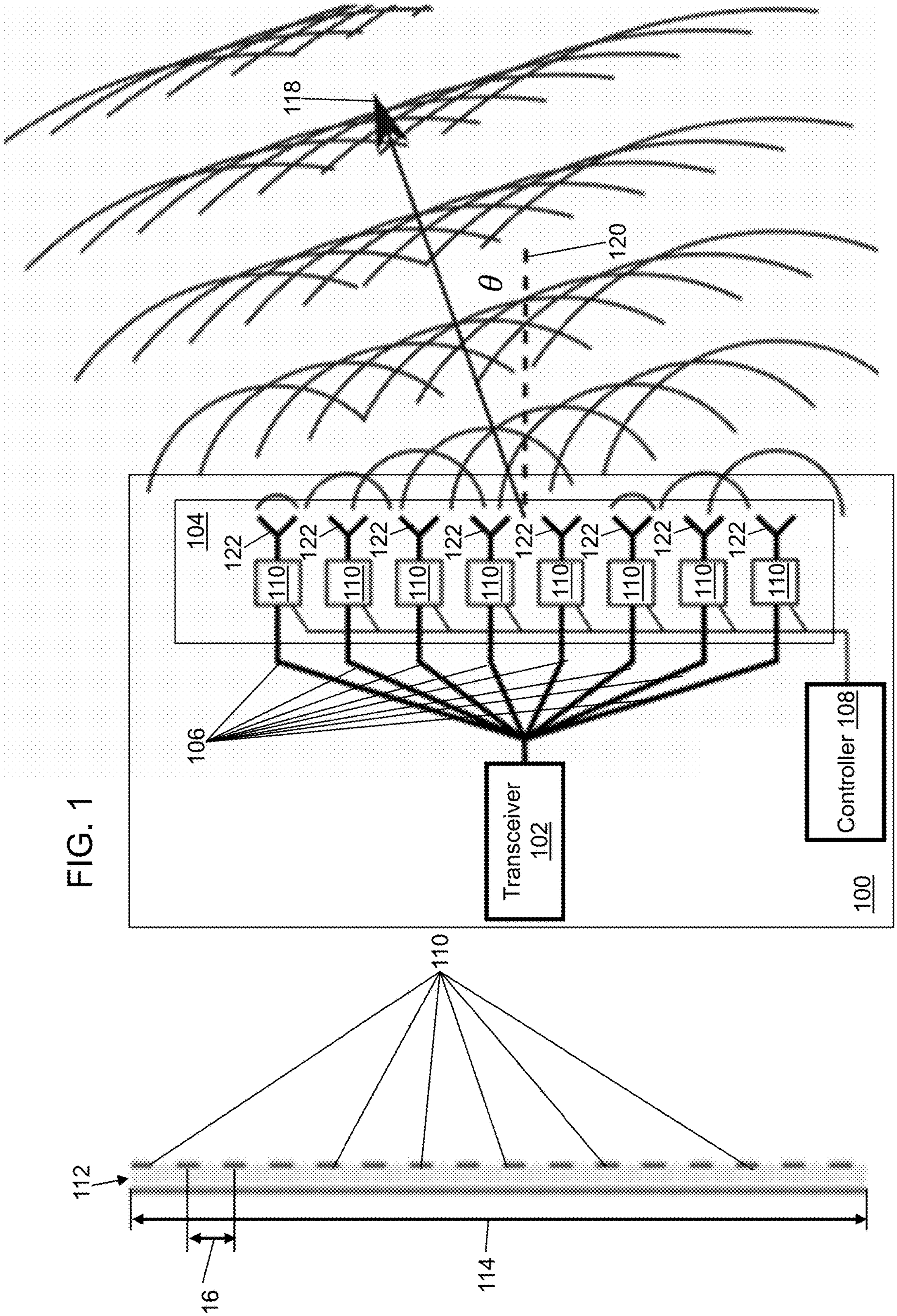

118
120
θ
104
122
110
106
Controller 108
Transceiver 102
100
112
114
116

FIG. 1

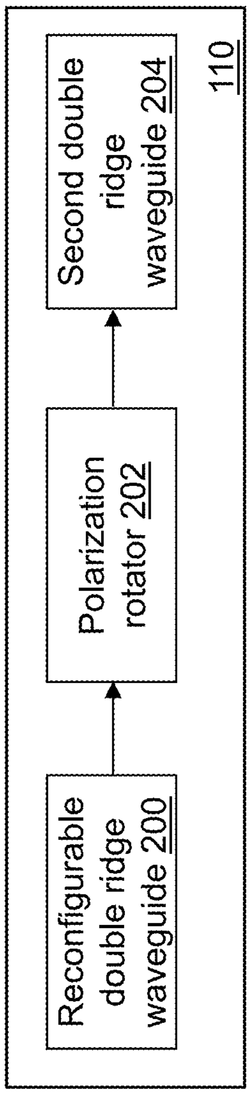

Reconfigurable double ridge waveguide 200
Polarization rotator 202
Second double ridge waveguide 204
110

FIG. 2

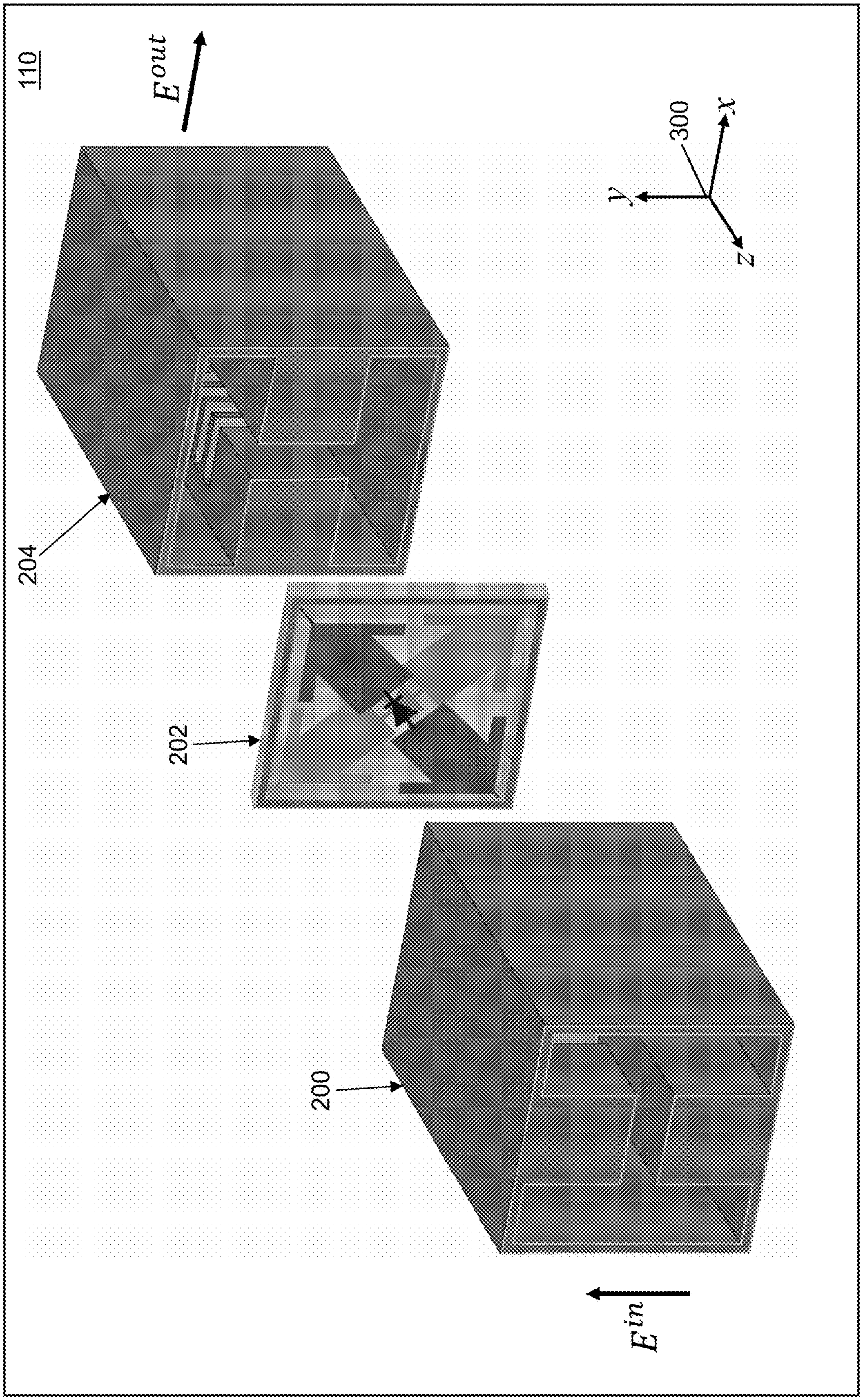


FIG. 3

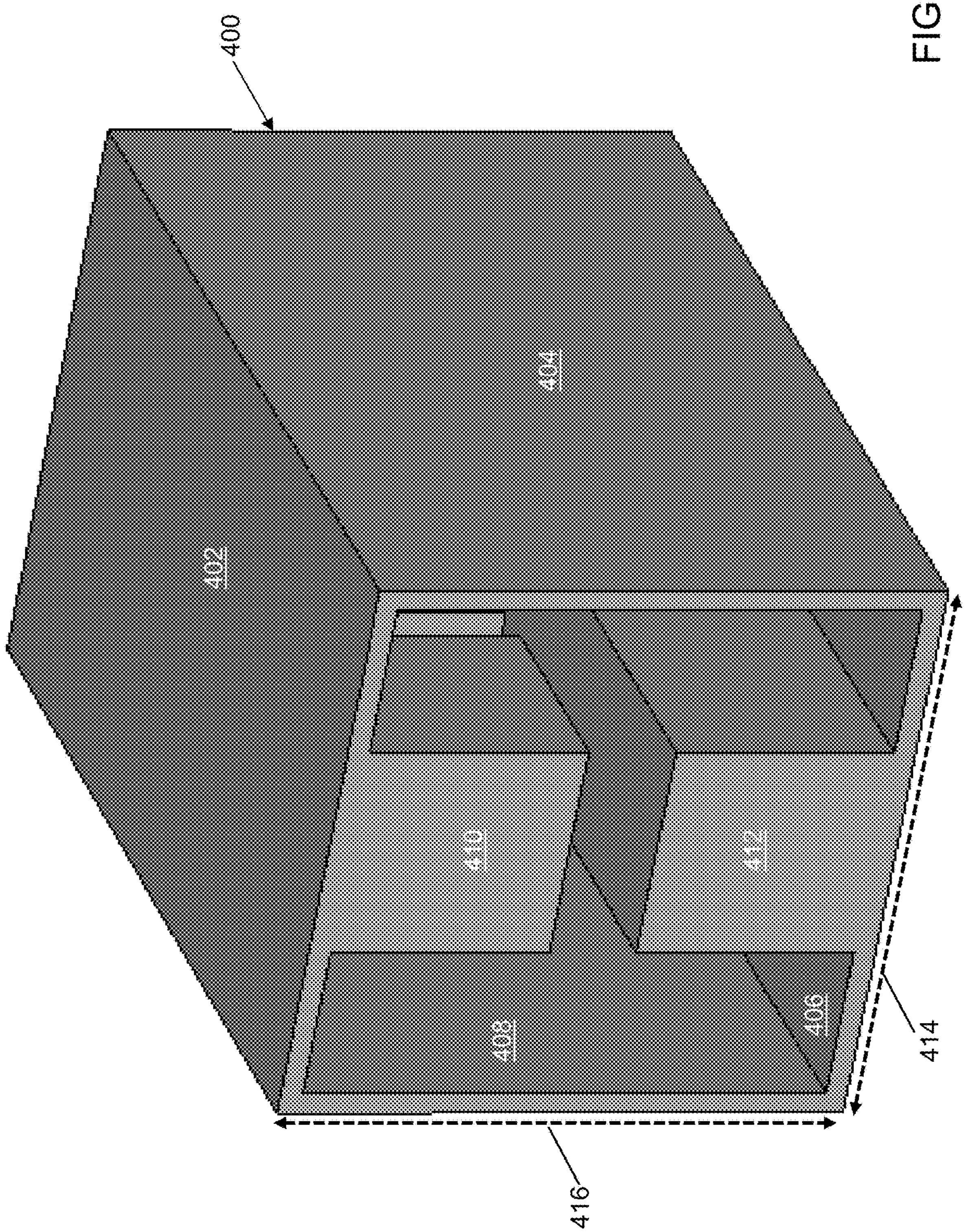


FIG. 4

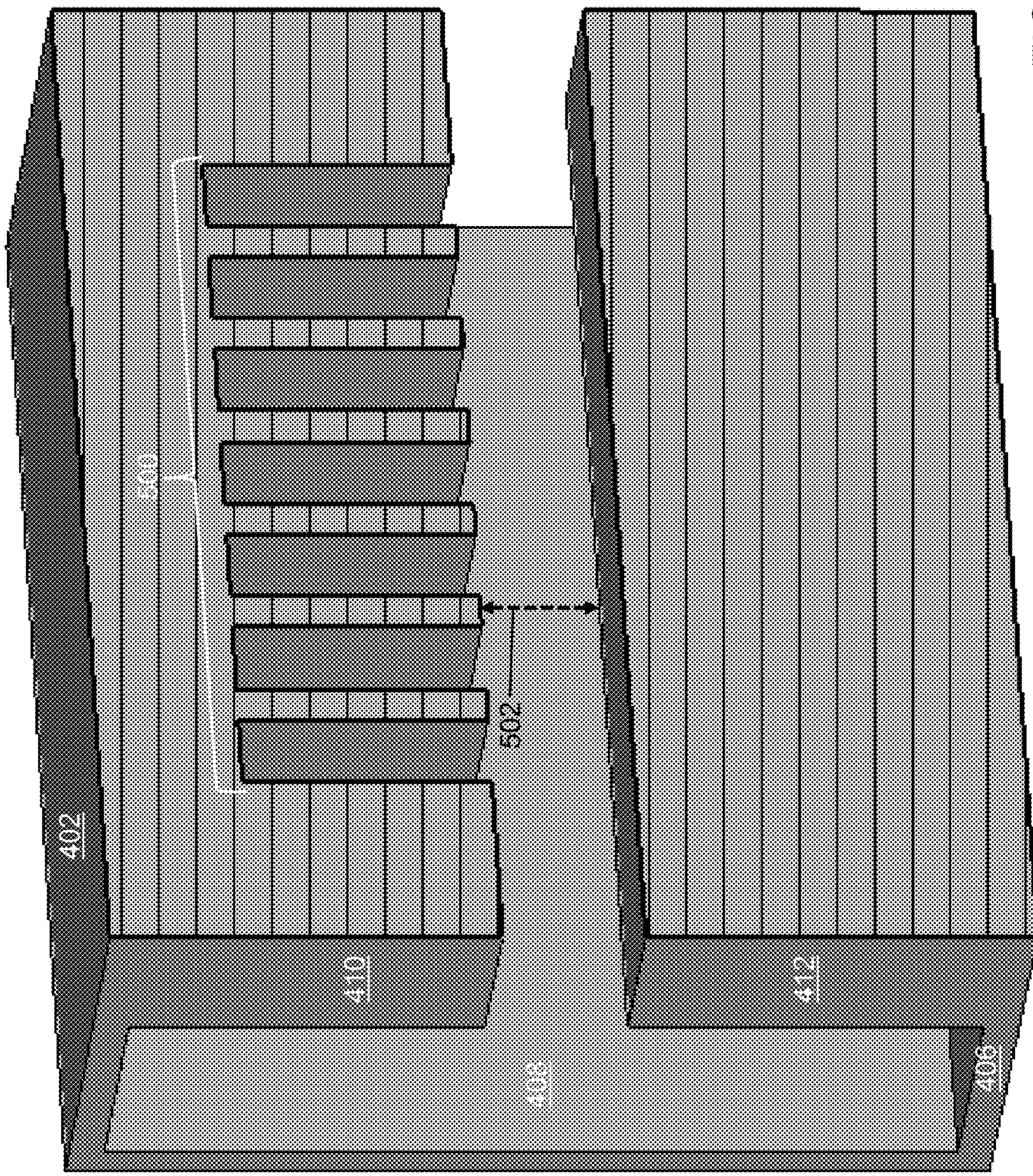


FIG. 5

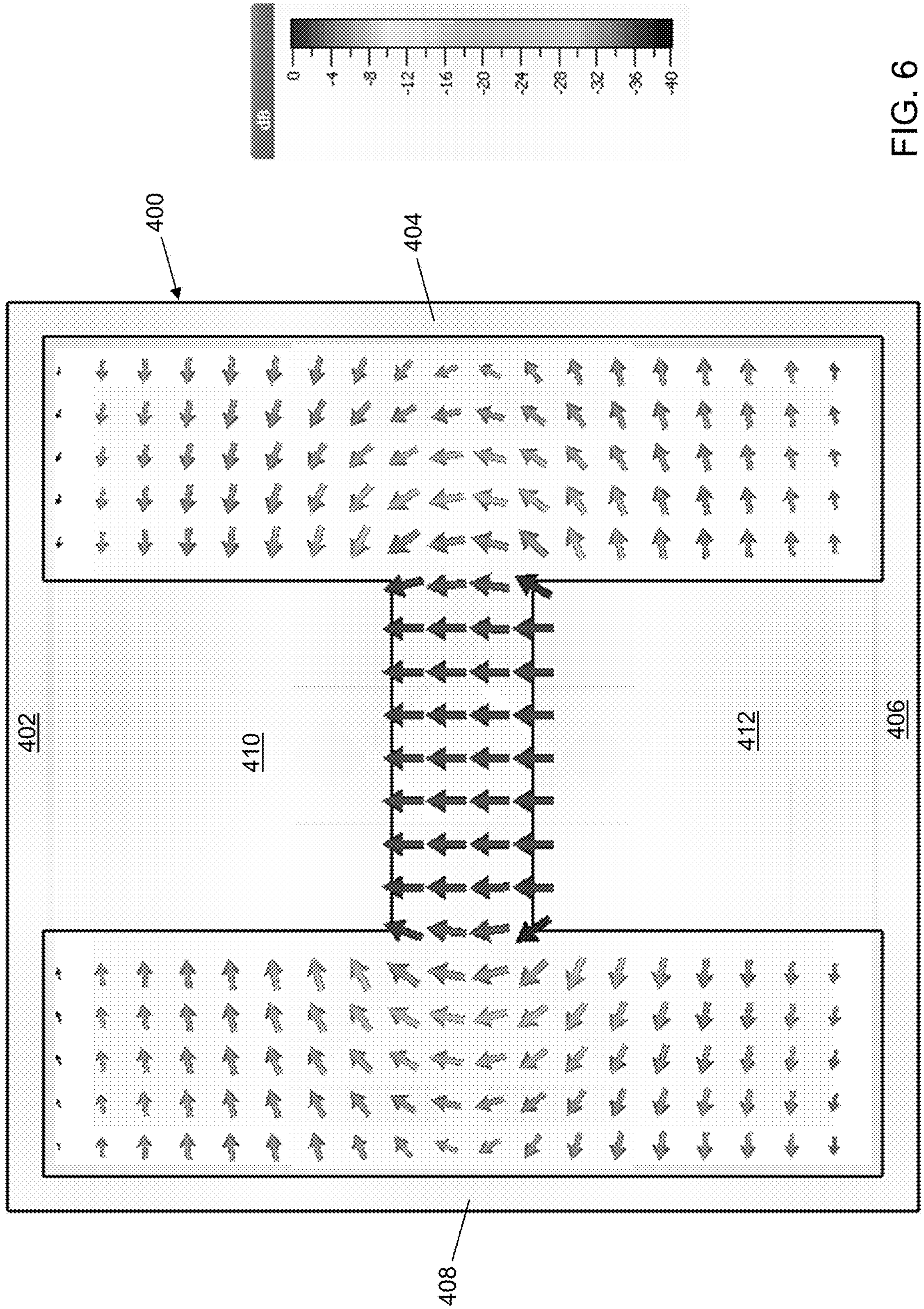


FIG. 6

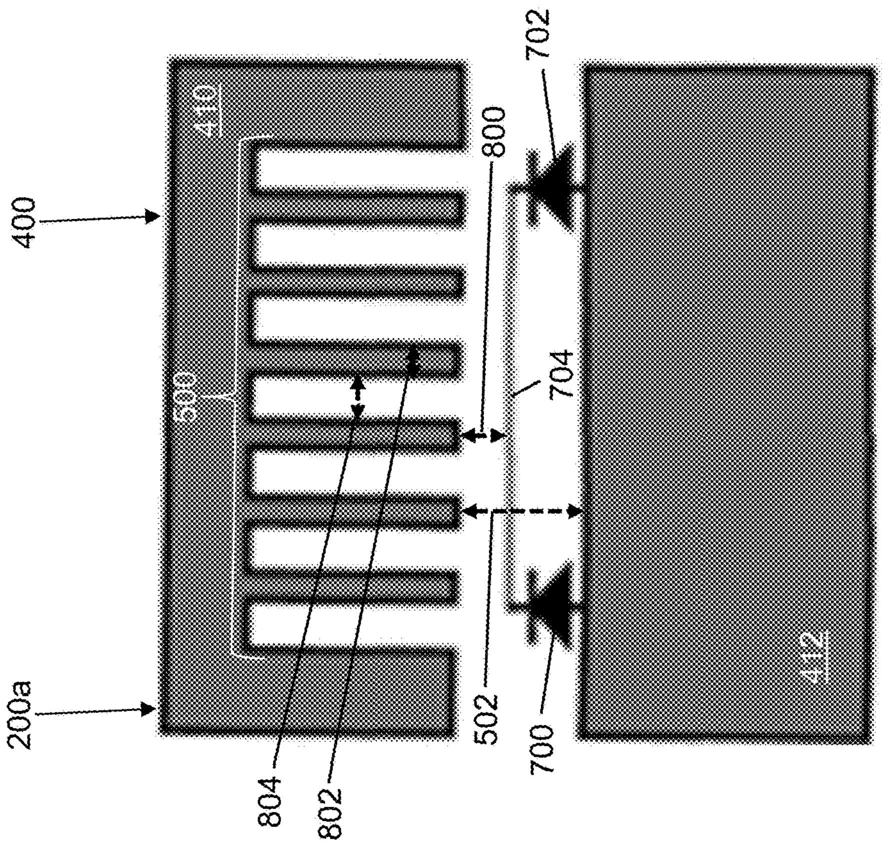

400
410
800
702
500
704
200a
412
502
700
804
802

FIG. 8

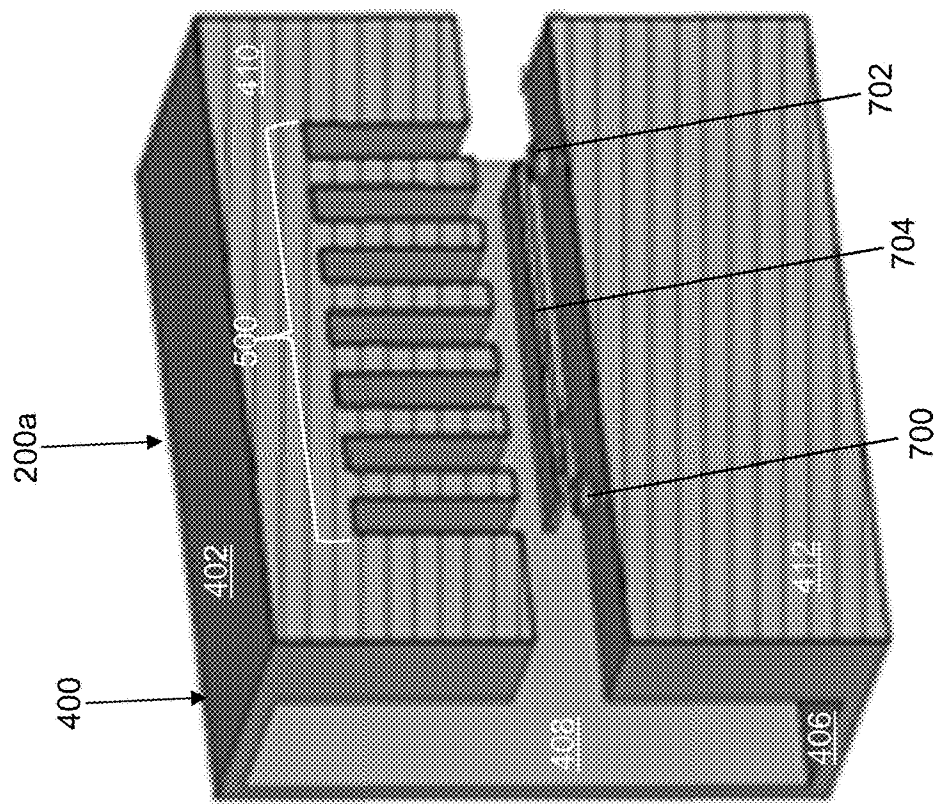

410
702
704
500
200a
700
402
412
400
408
406

FIG. 7

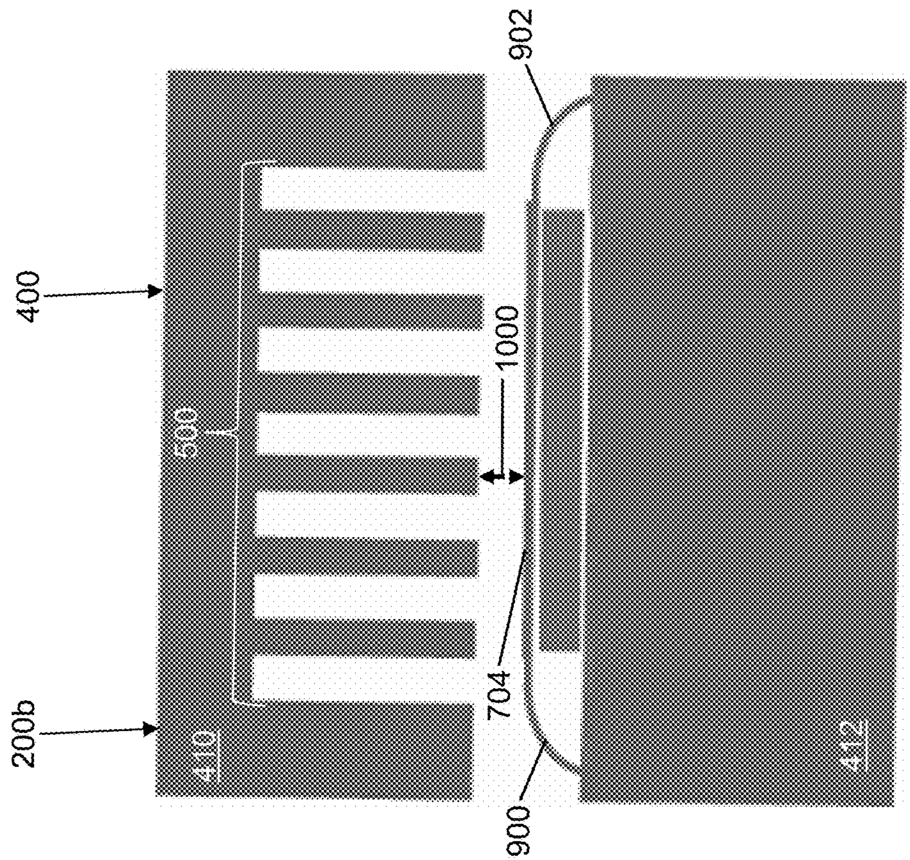

400
200b
500
410
412
1000
704
902
900

FIG. 10

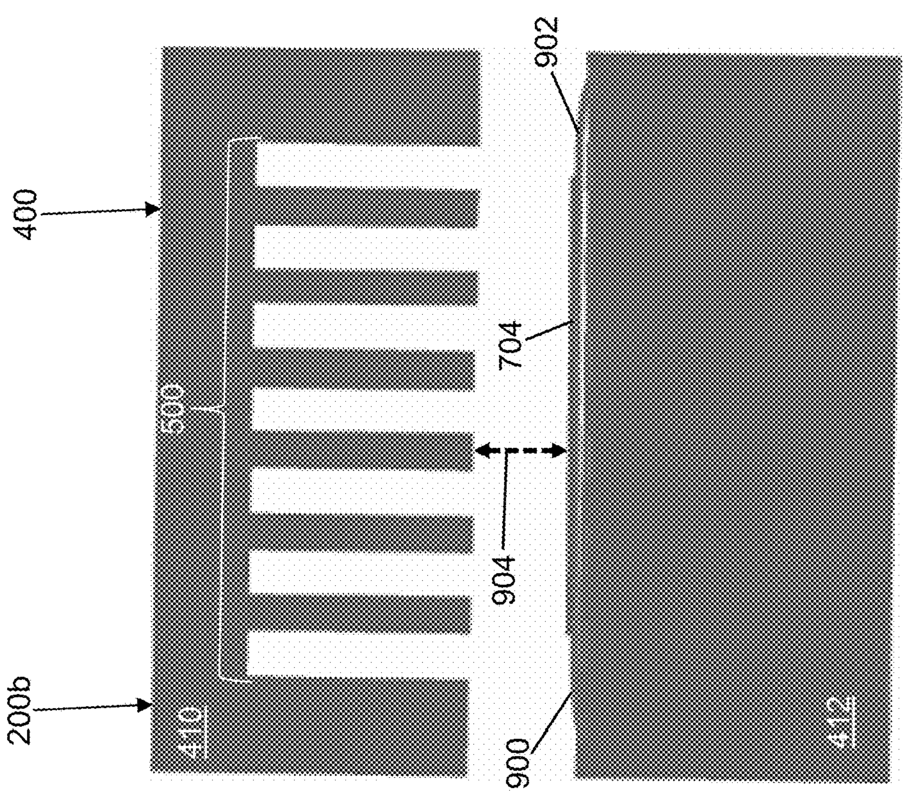

400
200b
500
410
412
902
704
904
900

FIG. 9

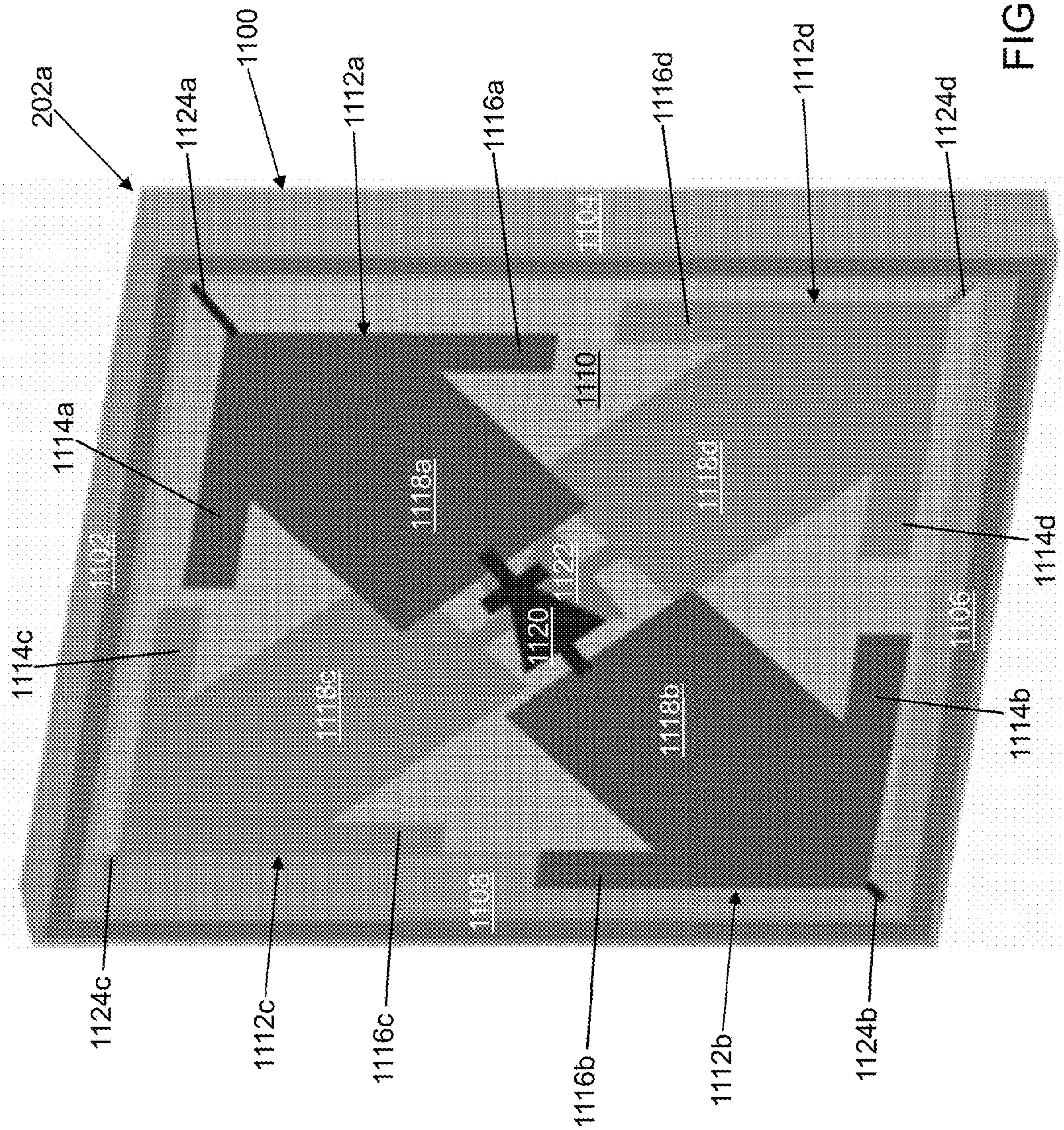

202a
1100
1124a
1112a
1116a
1116d
1112d
1124d
1104
1110
1114a
1102
1118a
1118d
1122
1120
1114c
1118c
1118b
1106
1114d
1114b
1108
1124c
1112c
1116c
1116b
1112b
1124b

FIG. 11A

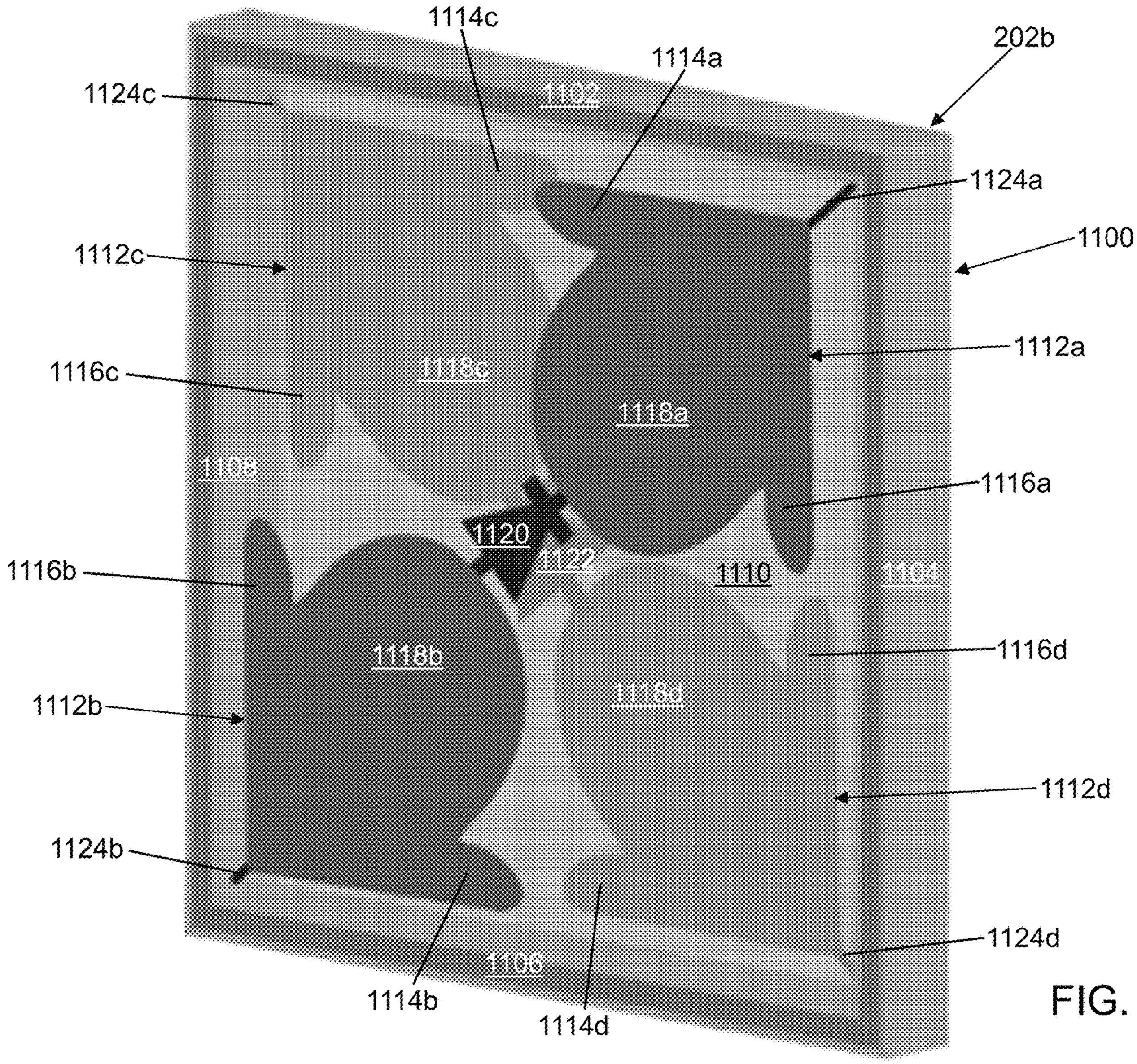

1114c
1114a
202b
1124c
1102
1124a
1100
1112c
1112a
1116c
1118c
1118a
1108
1116a
1120
1122
1110
1104
1116b
1118b
1116d
1118d
1112b
1112d
1124b
1124d
1106
1114b
1114d

FIG. 11B

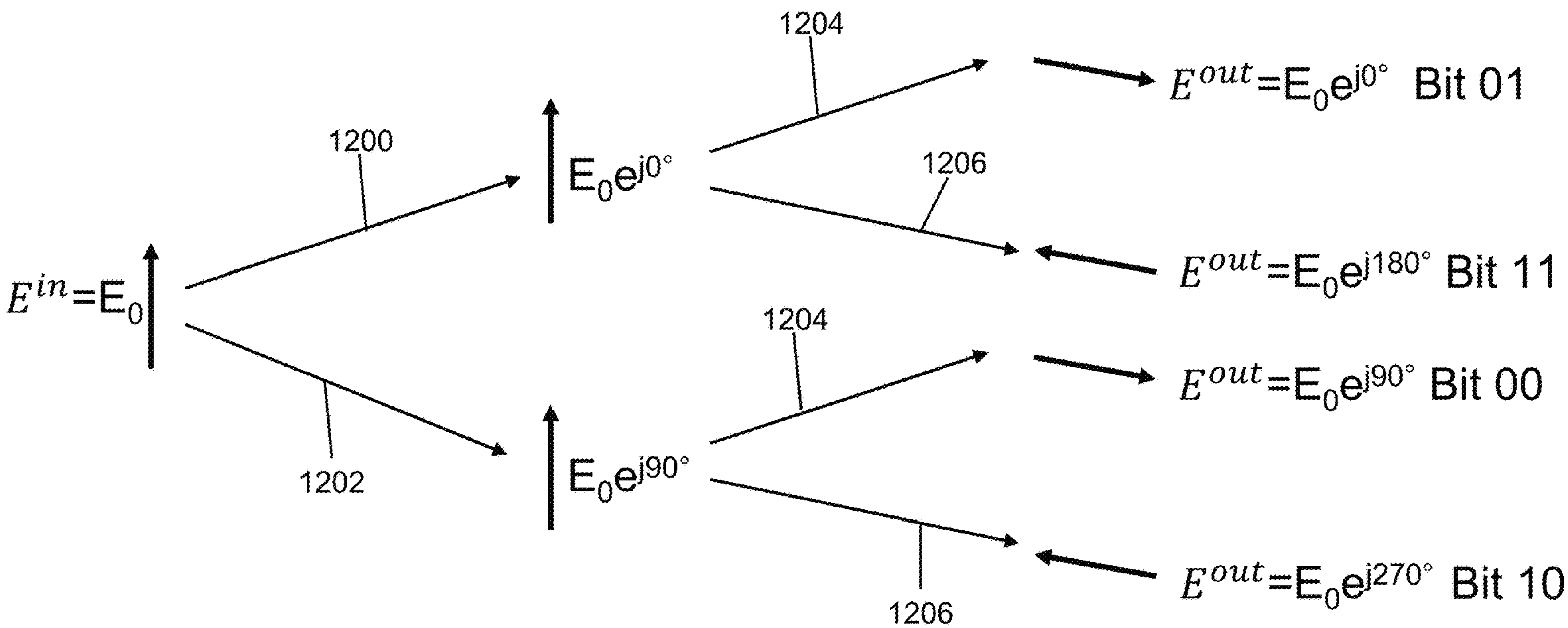
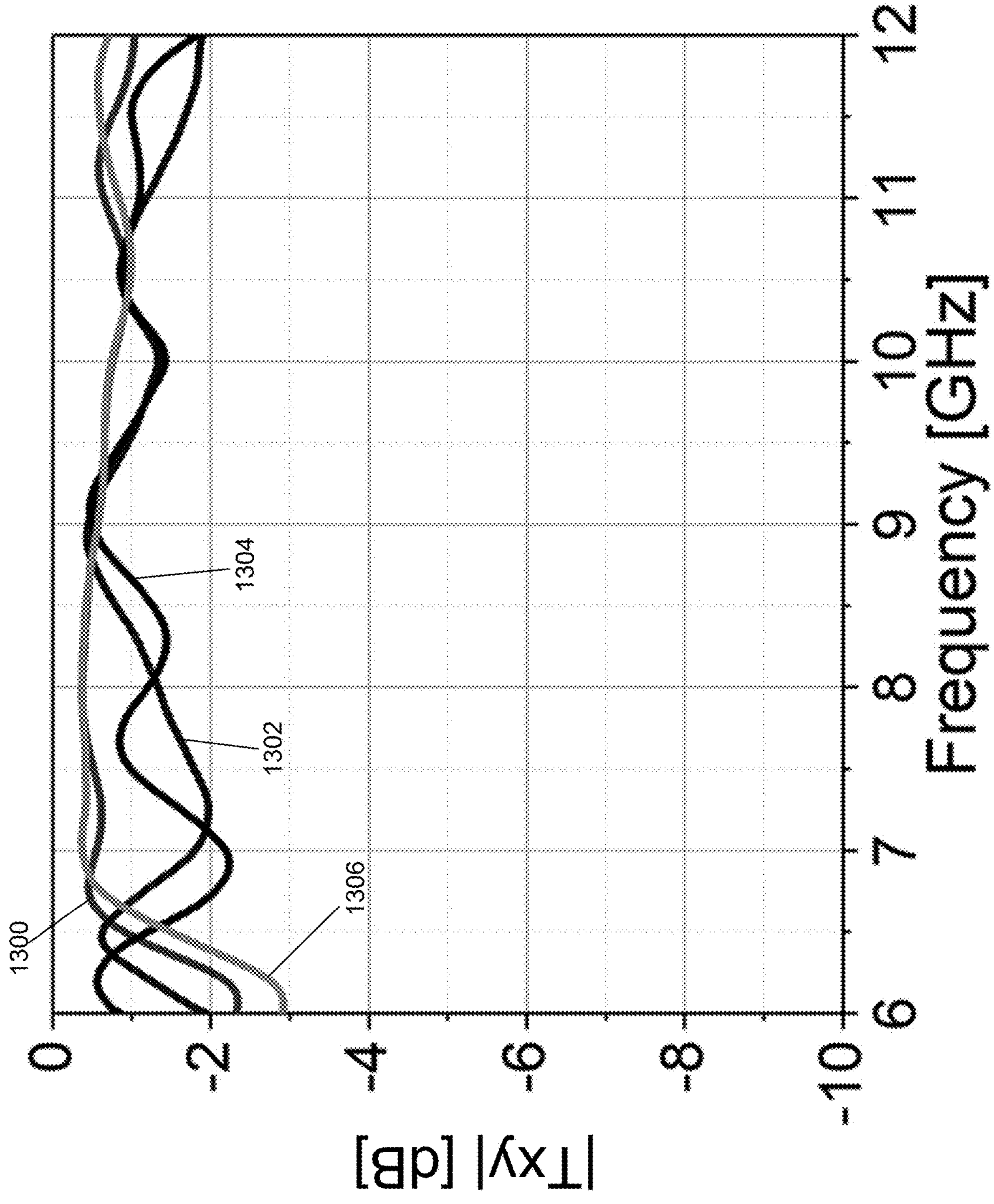

$E^{in}=E_0$
1200
1202
$E_0e^{j0°}$
$E_0e^{j90°}$
1204
1206
1204
1206
$E^{out}=E_0e^{j0°}$ Bit 01
$E^{out}=E_0e^{j180°}$ Bit 11
$E^{out}=E_0e^{j90°}$ Bit 00
$E^{out}=E_0e^{j270°}$ Bit 10

FIG. 12



|Txy| [dB]
0
-2
-4
-6
-8
-10
Frequency [GHz]
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
1300
1302
1304
1306

FIG. 13

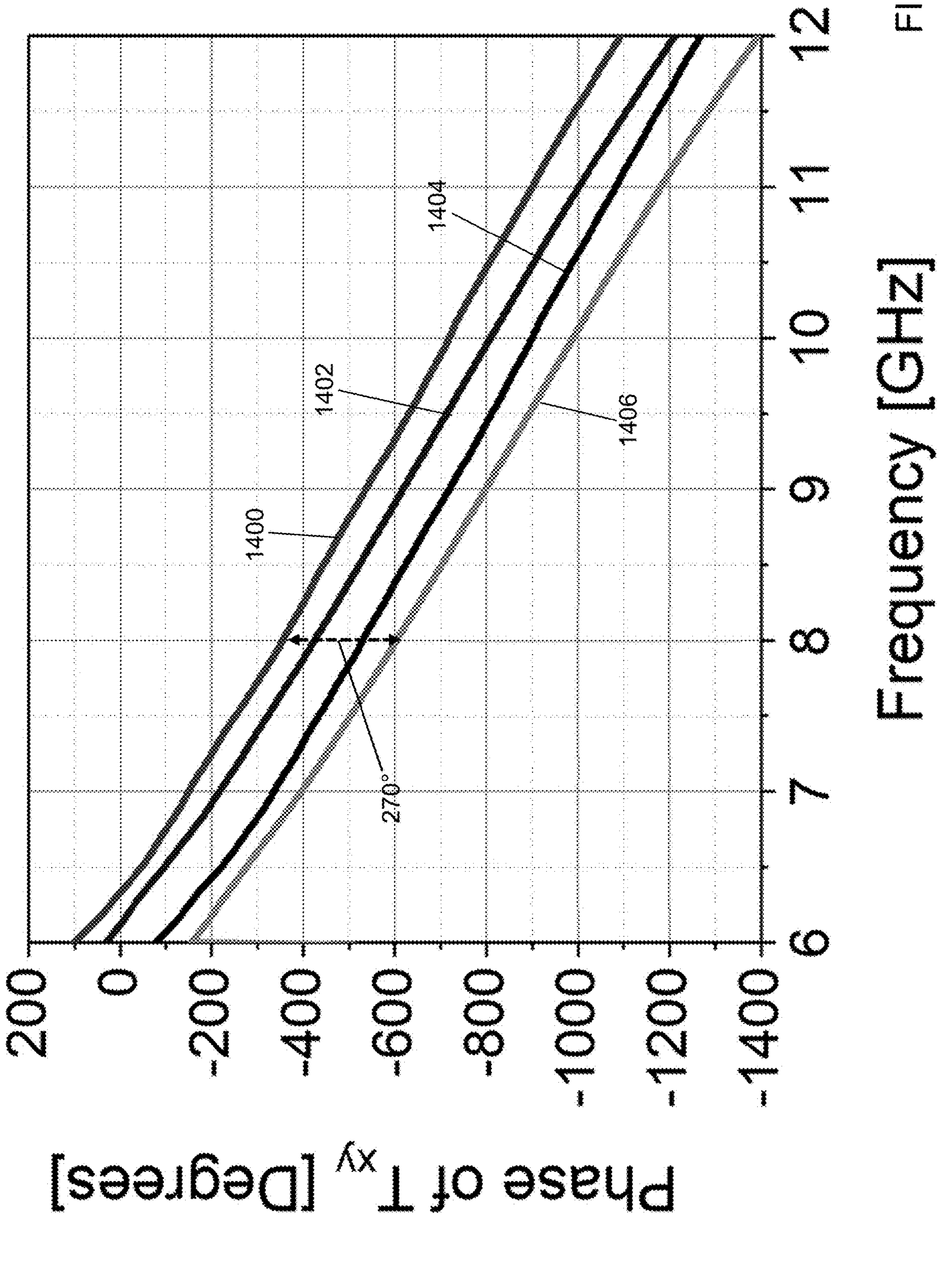

1400
1402
1404
1406
270°
Frequency [GHz]
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
Phase of T_{xy} [Degrees]
200
0
-200
-400
-600
-800
-1000
-1200
-1400

FIG. 14

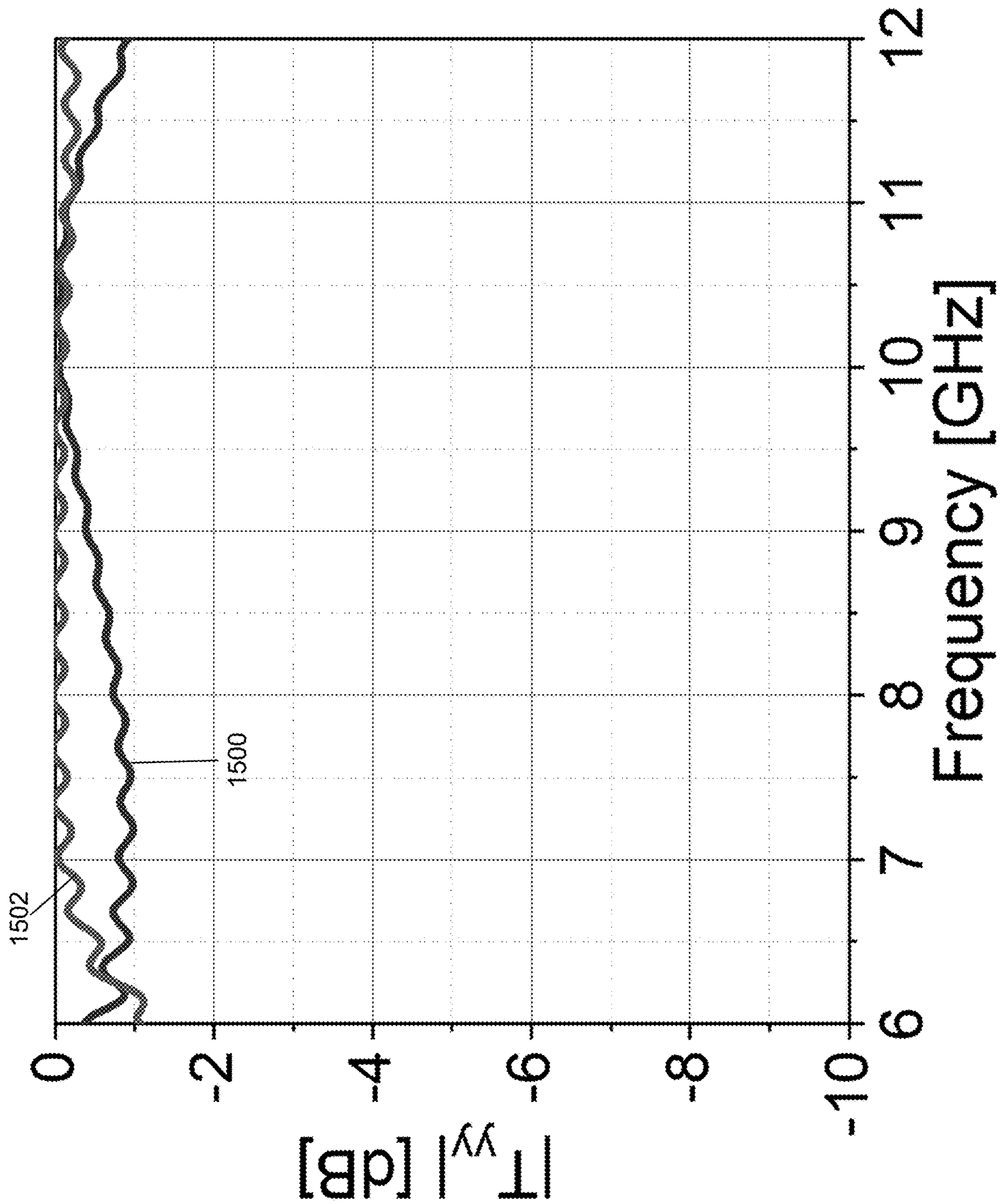
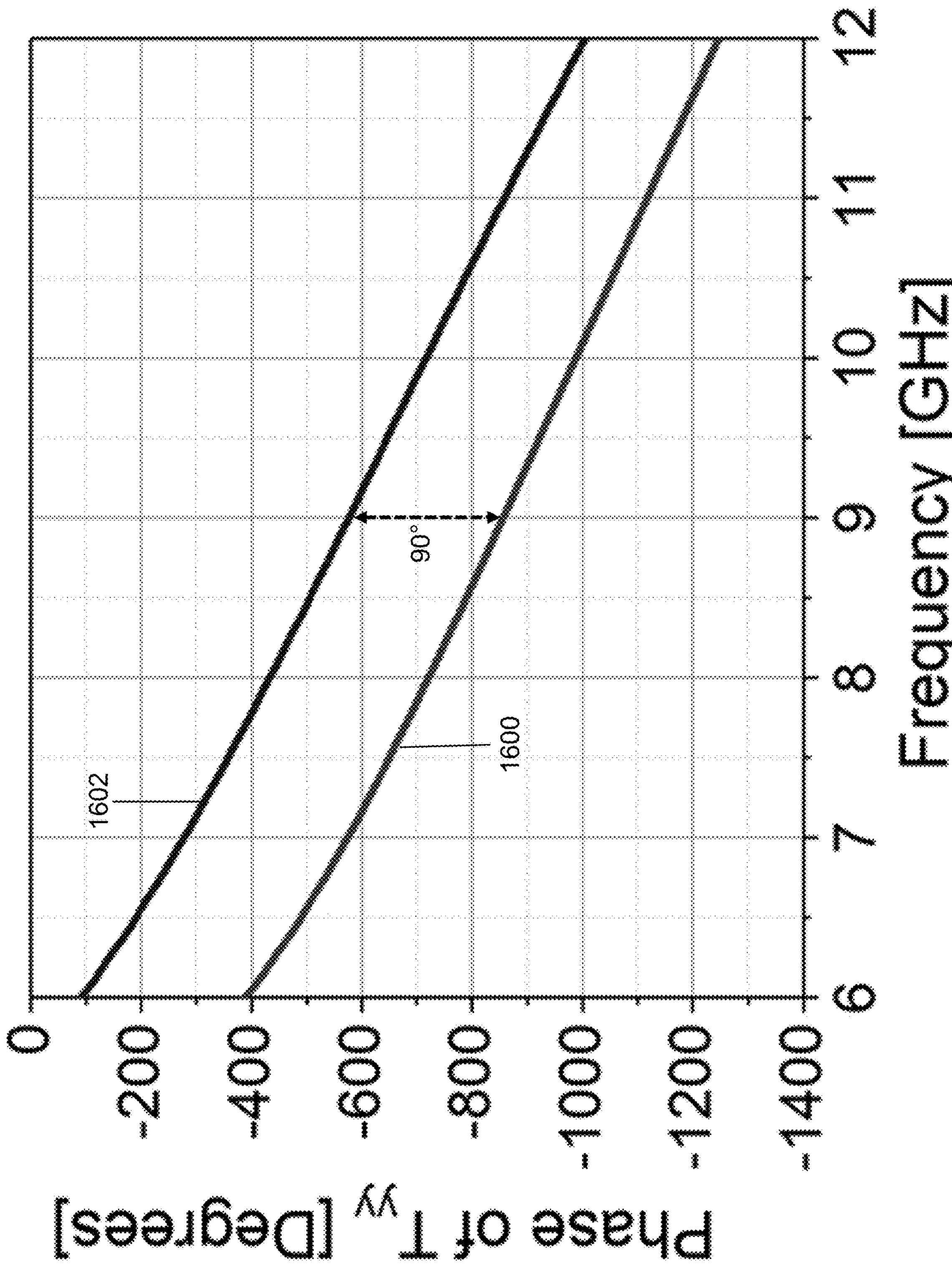


FIG. 15



0
-200
-400
-600
-800
-1000
-1200
-1400
Phase of T_yy [Degrees]
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
Frequency [GHz]
1602
1600
90°

FIG. 16

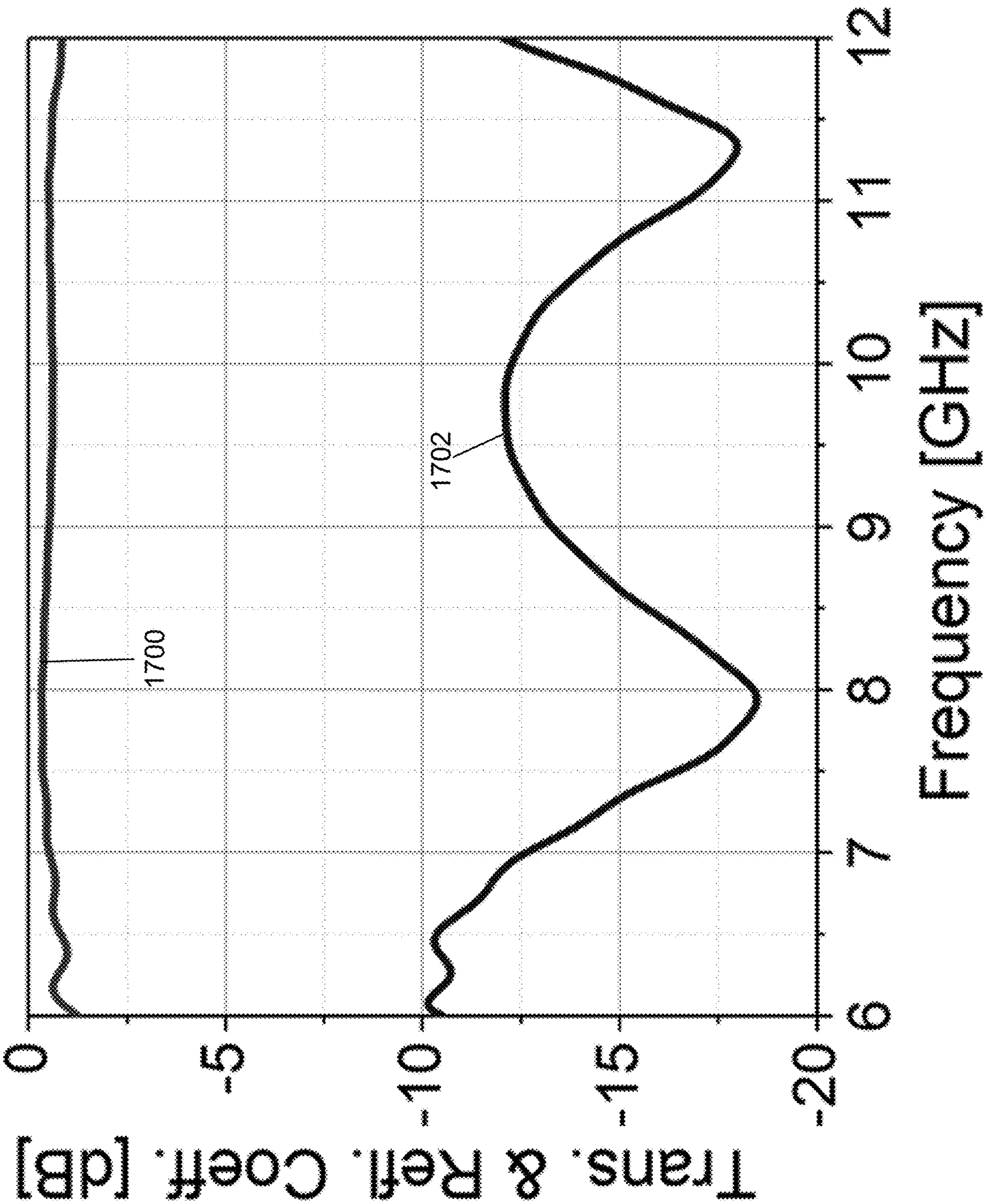
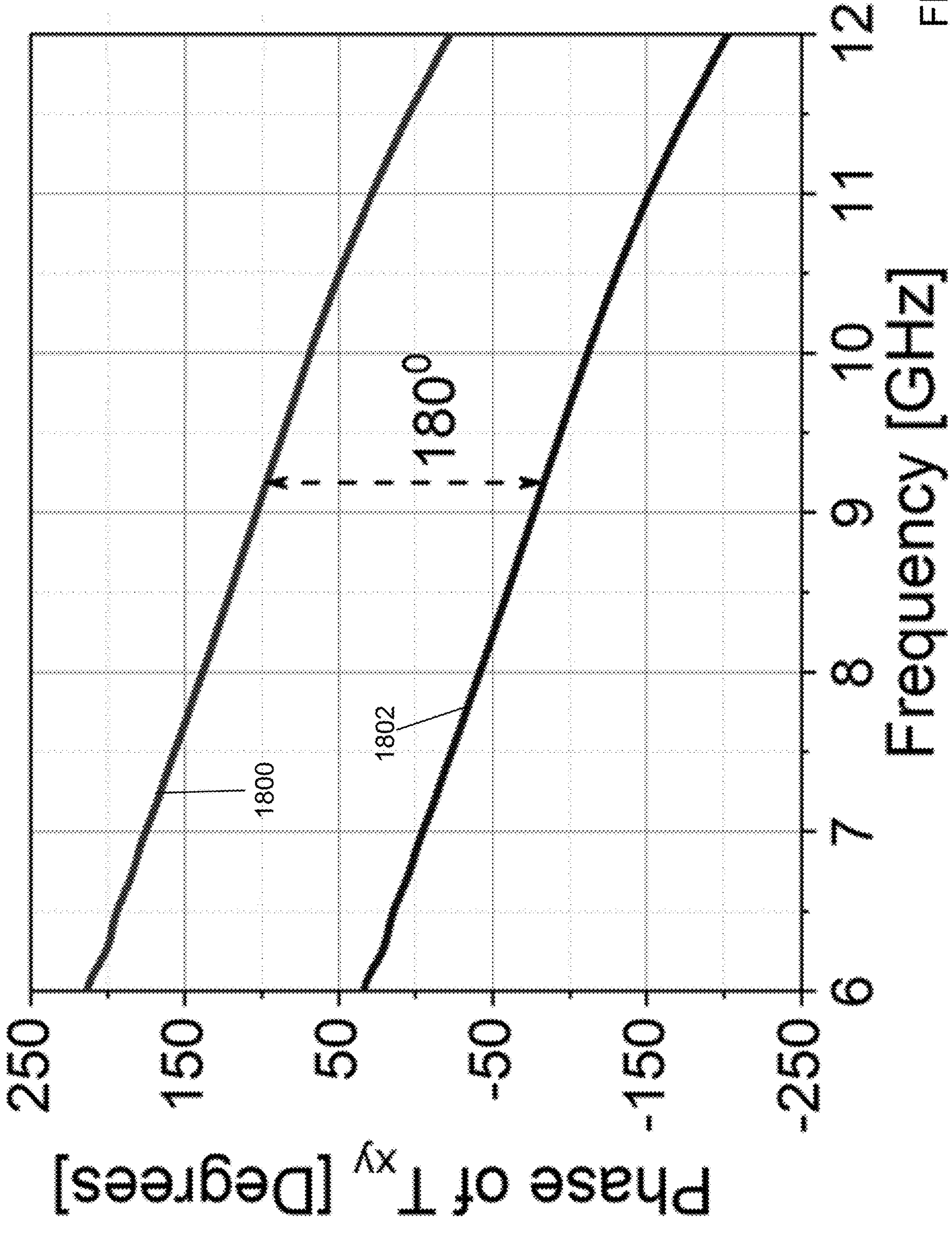

Trans. & Refl. Coeff. [dB]
0
-5
-10
-15
-20
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
Frequency [GHz]
1700
1702

FIG. 17



Phase of T_{xy} [Degrees]
250
150
50
-50
-150
-250
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
Frequency [GHz]
180^0
1800
1802

FIG. 18

2-BIT PHASE QUANTIZATION WAVEGUIDE

REFERENCE TO GOVERNMENT RIGHTS

This invention was made with government support under N00014-16-1-2308 awarded by the US Navy/ONR. The government has certain rights in the invention.

BACKGROUND

A phased array antenna is an array of antennas in which a relative phase of signals feeding each antenna is varied such that an effective radiation pattern of the array is reinforced in a desired direction and suppressed in undesired directions to provide electronic steering of a beam. Beams are formed by shifting the phase of the signal emitted from each radiating element to provide either constructive or destructive interference to steer the beam. These antenna systems come in different sizes and scales due to several factors such as frequency and power requirements.

Each unit cell of the phased array antenna is configured to apply a specific phase shift to realize a desired phase profile over the array's aperture to form a high gain pencil beam at an intended direction. The direction of the main beam can be steered by adaptively changing the phase of each array element. Ideally, it is desirable to have the phased array antenna's unit cells that can be reconfigured to yield any arbitrary phase shift values between 0° and 360° to provide perfect phase correction. However, the reconfiguration techniques to achieve any arbitrary phase shift values between 0° and 360° require changing the control voltage continuously and individually configuring the unit cells, which results in a relatively sophisticated architecture for voltage supply circuitry. Moreover, it is challenging to realize the full, reconfigurable 0° to 360° phase range over a broad frequency range (e.g., with fractional bandwidth of larger than 10%).

As a result, high-power phased array antenna technology that yields an affordable system is a major problem in the commercial and military wireless industry. Additionally, the solid-state technology that lies at the heart of current phased array antenna technology has inherent limitations when it comes to power and heat handling capability due to the generation of a large amount of heat. These limitations reduce the practicality of these reconfiguration techniques for various scenarios where phased array antennas having large numbers of unit cells and wideband operation are needed. Therefore, instead of fulfilling a continuous 0° to 360° phase range, discrete phase correction schemes that quantize this phase range into a number of discrete levels have been widely adopted in order to reduce the complexity of the control circuitry and increase operating bandwidths of beam-steerable phased array antennas.

The simplest phase quantization scheme is 1-bit, which has been demonstrated as sufficient for beam scanning operation. The use of two phase states for reconfigurable unit cells significantly reduces the complexity of the unit cell design and the digital control circuit compared to a phase correction scheme using a higher number of phase states. However, 1-bit discretization results in a large phase error accumulated over a phased array antenna's aperture reducing the directivity by about 3.7 decibel (dB) compared to that achieved by a perfectly collimated phased array antenna. Improving the phase quantization to 2-bit (e.g., four phase states) helps recover about 3 dB of this 3.7-dB directivity reduction, which is a significant improvement. Increasing the number of phase states beyond four yields only a modest increase in the directivity of less than 0.7 dB. This modest increase can be easily canceled by the higher losses due to additional switches and more complicated unit cell designs. Indeed, a number of publications reveal that an average phase shifter loss is about 1 dB/bit. This means adding one more bit to the phase correction scheme generally increases the overall system loss by 1 dB. Taking into account this phase shifter loss, an array using 3-bit phase shifters, while providing about a 0.5 dB higher directivity gain, provides a slightly lower realized gain compared to one using 2-bit phase shifters. In an electronically reconfigurable phased array antenna, a large fraction of the fabrication cost is often due to the switches (e.g., PIN-diode, MEMS switches) used for reconfiguration. Therefore, moving from a 1-bit to a 2-bit phase quantization scheme for reconfigurable phased array antennas provides the biggest performance improvement.

SUMMARY

In an illustrative embodiment, a waveguide is provided. The waveguide includes, but is not limited to, a first double-ridge waveguide, a second double-ridge waveguide, and a polarization rotator. The first double-ridge waveguide is formed of a first electrically conductive material. The first double-ridge waveguide is configured to generate a first electric field having a first polarization in response to an input electrical field having the first polarization or to generate a second electric field having the first polarization in response to the input electrical field. A first phase of the first electric field is rotated 0 degrees relative to a phase of the input electrical field when the input electrical field is applied to the first double-ridge waveguide. A second phase of the second electric field is rotated 90 degrees relative to the phase of the input electrical field when the input electrical field is applied to the first double-ridge waveguide. The second double-ridge waveguide is formed of a second electrically conductive material. The second double-ridge waveguide is configured to generate a third electric field with a polarization that is perpendicular to the first polarization. The polarization rotator is mounted between the first double-ridge waveguide and the second double-ridge waveguide and includes, but is not limited to, a frame, a dielectric layer, a first conducting pattern layer, a first switch, a second conducting pattern layer, and a second switch. The dielectric layer includes, but is not limited to, a first dielectric surface and a second dielectric surface formed within the frame. The first dielectric surface is on an opposite side of the dielectric layer relative to the second dielectric surface. The first dielectric surface is mounted adjacent an output side of the first double-ridge waveguide. The second dielectric surface is mounted adjacent an input side of the second double-ridge waveguide. The dielectric layer is formed of a dielectric material. The first conducting pattern layer is formed of a third electrically conductive material mounted to the first dielectric surface. The first conducting pattern layer includes, but is not limited to, a first conductor and a second conductor. The first switch is connected between the first conductor and the second conductor to electrically connect the first conductor to the second conductor or to electrically disconnect the first conductor from the second conductor. The second conducting pattern layer is formed of a fourth electrically conductive material mounted to the second dielectric surface. The second conducting pattern layer includes, but is not limited to, a third conductor and a fourth conductor. The second switch is connected between the third conductor and the fourth conductor to electrically connect the third conductor to the fourth conductor or to electrically disconnect the third conductor from the fourth conductor. When the first switch electrically connects the first conductor to the second conductor, the second switch electrically disconnects the third conductor from the fourth conductor to define a first mode of the polarization rotator. When the second switch electrically connects the third conductor to the fourth conductor, the first switch electrically disconnects the first conductor from the second conductor to define a second mode of the polarization rotator. The first mode is configured to rotate the first phase of the first electric field or the second phase of the second electric field by 90 degrees. The second mode is configured to rotate the first phase of the first electric field or the second phase of the second electric field by −90 degrees.

In another illustrative embodiment, a phased array antenna is provided. The phased array antenna includes, but is not limited to, a transmitter, a plurality of radiating antennas, and a plurality of waveguides. Each waveguide of the plurality of waveguides is mounted to receive electrical energy from the transmitter and to provide electrical energy to a respective radiating antenna of the plurality of radiating antennas.

Other principal features of the disclosed subject matter will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon review of the following drawings, the detailed description, and the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Illustrative embodiments of the disclosed subject matter will hereafter be described referring to the accompanying drawings, wherein like numerals denote like elements.

FIG. **1** depicts a side view of a transceiver system in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **2** depicts a block diagram of a phase-shifting waveguide in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **3** depicts a perspective side view of a phase-shifting waveguide in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **4** depicts a perspective side view of a double-ridge waveguide of the waveguide of FIG. **3** in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **5** depicts a perspective cross-sectional view of the double-ridge waveguide of FIG. **4** in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **6** depicts an electric field distribution of the double-ridge waveguide of FIG. **4** in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **7** depicts a perspective side view of a reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIG. **4** in accordance with a first illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **8** depicts a side cross-sectional view of the reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIG. **7** in accordance with the first illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **9** depicts a perspective side view of a reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIG. **4** in accordance with a second illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **10** depicts a side cross-sectional view of the reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIG. **9** in accordance with the second illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **11**A depicts a perspective side view of a polarization rotator of the waveguide of FIG. **3** in accordance with a first illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **11**B depicts a perspective side view of a polarization rotator of the waveguide of FIG. **3** in accordance with a second illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **12** illustrates an input electrical field and a corresponding output electric field generated based on an operating mode of the reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIGS. **7** and **9** and of the polarization rotator of FIG. **11**A in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **13** depicts magnitudes of simulated x-y transmission coefficients corresponding to four operating modes of the waveguide of FIG. **3** as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **14** depicts phases of simulated x-y transmission coefficients corresponding to four operating modes of the waveguide of FIG. **3** as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **15** depicts magnitudes of simulated y-y transmission coefficients corresponding to four operating modes of the reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIGS. **7** and **9** as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **16** depicts phases of simulated y-y transmission coefficients corresponding to four operating modes of the reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide of FIGS. **7** and **9** as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **17** depicts magnitudes of simulated x-y transmission coefficient and a simulated y-y reflection coefficient generated by the polarization rotator of FIG. **11**A as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

FIG. **18** depicts phases of simulated x-y transmission coefficients corresponding to two operating modes of the polarization rotator of FIG. **11**A as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring to FIG. **1**, a one-dimensional (1D) side view of a transceiver system **100** is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Transceiver system **100** may include a transceiver **102**, a plurality of waveguides **104**, a feed line network **106**, and a controller **108**. Transceiver system **100** may act as a transmitter and/or a receiver of analog or digital signals. Each waveguide of the plurality of waveguides **104** may include a phase-shifting waveguide **110** and a radiating antenna **122**. For illustration, radiating antenna **122** may be implemented as a horn antenna though other antenna types may be used in alternative embodiments. Each phase-shifting waveguide **110** is connected to radiating antenna **122** that is a waveguide-to-free space transition section that couples energy from phase-shifting waveguide **110** to free space more efficiently.

The plurality of waveguides is arranged to form a phased array antenna **112**. For example, a front of phased array antenna **112** may be arranged to form a 1D or a two-dimensional (2D) array of the plurality of waveguides **104**. The plurality of waveguides **104** may form variously shaped apertures including circular, rectangular, square, elliptical, etc. The plurality of waveguides **104** can include any number of waveguides **110** connected to radiating antenna **122**. Phased array antenna **112** has an aperture length **114** in a vertical plane and may further have a second aperture length (not shown) in a horizontal plane. A center of each radiating antenna **122** of the plurality of waveguides **104** may be separated a distance **116** from a center of each adjacent radiating antenna **122** in any direction.

Phased array antenna **112** can electronically change a pointing direction **118** of a main beam by changing a phase shift of electrical field output E^{out} from each phase-shifting waveguide **110** relative to an electrical field input E^{in} to each phase-shifting waveguide **110** under control of controller **108**. Controller **108** thereby electronically steers the main beam to different directions without moving any of the plurality of waveguides **104** or phased array antenna **112**. The electromagnetic energy associated with the electrical energy field input E^{in} from transceiver **102** is fed to each phase-shifting waveguide **110** of the plurality of waveguides **104** through feed line network **106**. Based on the pointing direction **118** of the main beam selected, controller **108** defines a phase shift value to be generated by each phase-shifting waveguide **110** of the plurality of waveguides **104**. Each phase-shifting waveguide **110** provides 2-bit phase quantization as discussed further below so that each phase-shifting waveguide **110** acts as a 2-bit phase shifter.

With the phase relationship defined by controller **108** for each phase-shifting waveguide **110**, the radio waves from each radiating antenna **122** connected to separate waveguides add together to increase the radiation in the pointing direction **118**, while cancelling to suppress radiation in undesired directions. The lines from each radiating antenna **122** represent a wave front of the electromagnetic waves emitted by each radiating antenna **122**. The individual wave fronts are spherical, but they combine in front of phased array antenna **112** to create a plane wave, a beam of radio waves travelling in the pointing direction **118**. In the illustration of FIG. **1**, a phase shift selected for each waveguide delays the waves progressively going up the aperture of phased array antenna **112** so that each radiating antenna **122** emits its wave front later than the one below it. The resulting plane wave is directed at the pointing direction **118** which is an angle θ measured relative to a boresight axis **120** of phased array antenna **112**. By changing the phase shifts of each phase-shifting waveguide **110**, controller can instantly change angle θ of the main beam. A 2D phased array can steer the main beam in two dimensions.

Transceiver system **100** may include a plurality of transceivers, and phased array antenna **112** may be organized into subarrays to support a plurality of main beams. For example, a distinct transceiver **102** may be associated with one or more waveguides **110** of the plurality of waveguides **104**. Additionally, in alternative embodiments, transceiver **102** may only transmit or only receive.

Referring to FIG. **2**, a block diagram of phase-shifting waveguide **110** is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Referring to FIG. **3**, a perspective side view of phase-shifting waveguide **110** is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. phase-shifting waveguide **110** may include a reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**, a polarization rotator **202**, and a second double-ridge waveguide **204**. Reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**, polarization rotator **202**, and second double-ridge waveguide **204** are mounted adjacent to each other in an axial direction with polarization rotator **202** between reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** and second double-ridge waveguide **204**. Each of reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**, polarization rotator **202**, and second double-ridge waveguide **204** is formed of four walls arranged to form a hollow polygon such as a square or rectangle. phase-shifting waveguide **110** is a conduit with a frame formed of electrically conductive material used to confine and direct radio signals. Though in the illustrative embodiment, phase-shifting waveguide **110** is shown as having a square cross-sectional shape, a rectangular cross-sectional shape may be used in alternative embodiments.

Phase-shifting waveguide **110** is a direct-fed radiating element capable of providing wideband 2-bit phase quantization. Polarization rotator **202** can be placed into one of two operating states that rotate the polarization of a transmitted wave by +90° or by −90° with respect to that of an incident wave, creating two relative phase states of 0° and 180° for the transmitted wave. These two switchable phase states are combined with two phase shift values of 0° or of 90° generated by reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** to produce four relative phase states of 0°, 90°, 180°, or 270° for the transmitted wave.

In the illustrative embodiment, reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** is oriented in a vertical direction in an x-y plane because electrical field input E^{in} is assumed to be vertically polarized, and second double-ridge waveguide **204** is oriented in a horizontal direction in the x-y plane because electrical field output E^{out} will be horizontally polarized. In alternative embodiments, reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** may be oriented in the horizontal direction, and second double-ridge waveguide **204** may be oriented in the vertical direction. The axial direction is parallel to a z-axis, where an x-axis is perpendicular to a y-axis, and both the x-axis and the y-axis are perpendicular to the z-axis to form a right-handed coordinate reference frame denoted x-y-z frame **300**.

In the illustrative embodiment, two operating modes of reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** generate relative phase shift values of 0° or 90°, when the phase shift provided by one of the two modes is taken as reference, to generate electrical field input to polarization rotator **202** designated E^{inPR}. In the illustrative embodiment, polarization rotator **202** provides either a 90° or a −90° of polarization rotation to E^{inPR} to generate electrical field input to second double-ridge waveguide **204** designated E^{inDWG}. Second double-ridge waveguide **204** acts as a horizontal filter applied to E^{inDWG} to generate electrical field output E^{out} that is horizontally polarized with a phase shift of 0°, 90°, 180°, or 270° relative to the phase of electrical field output E^{out} provided by one of the four operating modes. As a result, phase-shifting waveguide **110** can be configured to produce four relative phase states of 0°, 90°, 180°, or 270° for the transmitted wave.

Referring to FIG. **4**, a perspective side view of a double-ridge waveguide **400** is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Referring to FIG. **5**, a perspective cross-sectional view of double-ridge waveguide **400** is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Referring to FIG. **6**, an electric field distribution created by double-ridge waveguide **400** is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Both reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** and second double-ridge waveguide **204** may be structured similar to double-ridge waveguide **400** though second double-ridge waveguide **204** is rotated 90° relative to double-ridge waveguide **400**. Reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** includes additional elements that make the output phase shift selectable between 0° or 90° as discussed further below.

Double-ridge waveguide **400** may include a top wall **402**, a right side wall **404**, a bottom wall **406**, a left side wall **408**, a first ridge **410**, and a second ridge **412**. A cross-section width **414** is defined as a width between right side wall **404** and left side wall **408**. A cross-section height **416** is defined as a height between top wall **402** and bottom wall **406**. Cross-section width **414** and cross-section height **416** may define cross-section dimensions of phase-shifting waveguide **110**. A plurality of teeth **500** is formed in first ridge **410** that open toward second ridge **412**. First ridge **410** and second ridge **412** reduce an internal height of double-ridge waveguide **400** in a horizontal direction or a vertical direction depending on the orientation of double-ridge waveguide

400. First ridge **410** and second ridge **412** extend a partial width or a partial height across double-ridge waveguide **400** with first ridge **410** and second ridge **412** separated by a gap having a predefined length **502**. Dimensions for the walls of double-ridge waveguide **400**, for the ridges, for the predefined length, for the plurality of teeth **500**, etc. may be selected based on an upper operating frequency f_u and a lower operating frequency f_l of the electrical field input E^{in} that defines corresponding wavelengths

$$\lambda_u = \frac{c}{f_u} \text{ and } \lambda_l = \frac{c}{f_l},$$

where c is a speed of light. FIG. **6** shows the electric field distribution created by double-ridge waveguide **400** with the primary electrical field generated in a vertical direction between first ridge **410** and second ridge **412**. A description of an illustrative structure for double-ridge waveguide **400** can be found in Balanis, Constantine A. Advanced, *Engineering Electromagnetics* 466-470 (2d ed. Wiley 2012).

Referring to FIG. **7**, a perspective side cross-sectional view of a first reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Referring to FIG. **8**, a side cross-sectional view of first reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. First reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* may include double-ridge waveguide **400**, a first diode **700**, a second diode **702**, and a plate **704**. First diode **700** and second diode **702** are connected to controller **108** that selectively provides a first signal that causes a current to flow simultaneously through first diode **700** and through second diode **702** to plate **704** or provides a second signal that causes no current to flow through first diode **700** or second diode **702** to plate **704** thereby electrically isolating plate **704**. As a result, the first signal electrifies plate **704** that is formed of an electrically conductive material such as a metal.

Electrification of plate **704** reduces predefined length **502** of the gap between first ridge **410** and second ridge **412** to a second predefined length **800**. Second predefined length **800** is selected to generate the 90° phase shift relative to the phase of electrical field output E^{out} provided when predefined length **502** is selected. In an alternative embodiment, second predefined length **800** may be selected to generate the −90° phase shift relative to the phase of electrical field output E^{out} The first signal may be associated with a bit **0**, and the second signal may be associated with a bit **1** though this is arbitrary. A ridge width **802** defines a width of each ridge of the plurality of teeth **500** and a gap between ridges **804** defines a width of a gap between each pair of ridged of the plurality of teeth **500**.

The region between first ridge **410** and plate **704** connected to second ridge **412** forms a waveguide section. A phase velocity of a wave propagated in reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* can be varied by changing a distance between first ridge **410** and second ridge **412**. The wave travels faster in one state, for example, having the distance defined by second predefined length **800** and slower in the other state, for example, having the distance defined by predefined length **502**. The different phase velocity provided by the two states results in a difference between the phases of the guided wave, for example, propagating from left to right, when the guided wave reaches to a right end of plate **704**. A height of plate **704** or a difference defined by predefined length **502** minus second predefined length **800** determines the differences in the phase velocity between the two states. Varying the length of plate **704** and the plurality of teeth **500**, which are selected to be the same, changes the amount of phase shift between the electric fields at the right end of plate **704** in two different states from 0 to 360 degrees. Therefore, a length of plate **704** that gives a phase shift of 90 degrees is chosen. The phase shift between the two modes can be either 90 or −90 degrees depending on the length of plate **704** though one option may result in a longer plate **704** than the other. For illustration, U.S. Pat. No. 4,725,795 that issued Feb. 16, 1988 describes a design of similar structures.

In an illustrative embodiment, first diode **700** and second diode **702** are PIN diodes that have a wide, undoped intrinsic semiconductor region between a p-type semiconductor and an n-type semiconductor region. The p-type and n-type regions are typically heavily doped for use as ohmic contacts to provide fast switching. In alternative embodiments, first diode **700** and second diode **702** may be replaced with any single pole, single throw (SPST) switch device or other electrical structure that acts as an SPST switch device. For example, the SPST switch device may be a mechanical switch, a microelectromechanical system (MEMS) switch, a commercially available SPST switch, one or more PIN diodes, etc. Each of first diode **700** and second diode **702** form switchable connections that have two states: short referred to as a conducting position, and open referred to as a non-conducting position.

Referring to FIG. **9**, a side cross-sectional view of a second reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***b* in a first position is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Referring to FIG. **10**, a side cross-sectional view of second reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***b* in a second position is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. Second reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***b* may include double-ridge waveguide **400**, a first actuator **900**, a second actuator **902**, and plate **704**. First actuator **900** and second actuator **902** are connected to and controlled by controller **108** that selectively provides a first signal that moves plate **704** to the first position where plate **704** is separated from second ridge **412** by a third predefined length **904** or provides a second signal that moves plate **704** to the second position where plate **704** is separated from second ridge **412** by a fourth predefined length **1000**. Third predefined length **904** is selected to generate the 90° phase shift relative to the phase provided when fourth predefined length **1000** is selected. In an alternative embodiment, third predefined length **904** may be selected to generate the −90° phase shift relative to the phase provided when fourth predefined length **1000** is selected. The first signal may be associated with a bit **0**, and the second signal may be associated with a bit **1** though this is arbitrary.

Referring to FIG. **11**A, a perspective side view of a first polarization rotator **202***a* is shown in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. First polarization rotator **202***a* may include a rotator top wall **1102**, a rotator right side wall **1104**, a rotator bottom wall **1106**, a rotator left side wall **1108**, a dielectric layer **1110**, a first corner conductor **1112***a*, a second corner conductor **1112***b*, a third corner conductor **1112***c*, a fourth corner conductor **1112***d*, a first rotator diode **1120**, a second rotator diode **1122**, a first bias line **1124***a*, a second bias line **1124***b*, a third bias line **1124***c*, and a fourth bias line **1124***d*. Rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108** define a frame for first polarization rotator **202***a* that is square in the illustrative embodiment with a width and a height that are similar to those selected for reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200** and second double-ridge waveguide **204**.

Dielectric layer **1110** is formed of a dielectric material that extends between rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108**. Dielectric layer **1110** may be formed of one or more dielectric materials that may include foamed polyethylene, solid polyethylene, polyethylene foam, polytetrafluoroethylene, air, air space polyethylene, vacuum, etc. Illustrative dielectric materials include RO4003C laminate and RO3006 laminate sold by Rogers Corporation headquartered in Chandler, Ariz., USA.

First polarization rotator **202***a* behaves like an inductor. A size and substrate selection for first polarization rotator **202***a* affects the inductance. The width and length of first polarization rotator **202***a* may be selected based on a dielectric constant and thickness of dielectric layer **1110** to provide a desired inductance value.

First corner conductor **1112***a* and second corner conductor **1112***b* are formed on a left surface of dielectric layer **1110** and define a first conducting pattern layer, and third corner conductor **1112***c* and fourth corner conductor **1112***d* are formed on a right surface of dielectric layer **1110** opposite left surface of dielectric layer **1110** define a second conducting pattern layer. First corner conductor **1112***a*, second corner conductor **1112***b*, third corner conductor **1112***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1112***d* can have any crossed-dipole shape.

First corner conductor **1112***a*, second corner conductor **1112***b*, third corner conductor **1112***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1112***d* are formed of an electrically conductive material such as copper plated steel, silver plated steel, silver plated copper, silver plated copper clad steel, copper, copper clad aluminum, steel, etc. First corner conductor **1112***a*, second corner conductor **1112***b*, third corner conductor **1112***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1112***d* may be generally flat or formed of ridges or bumps. For illustration, first corner conductor **1112***a*, second corner conductor **1112***b*, third corner conductor **1112***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1112***d* may be formed of flexible membranes coated with a conductor. The left surface is mounted adjacent an input side of reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**, and the right surface is mounted adjacent an output side of second double-ridge waveguide **204** in the illustrative orientations shown.

In the illustrative embodiment, first corner conductor **1124***a*, second corner conductor **1124***b*, third corner conductor **1124***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1124***d* each form an open arrow shape with arrow tip arms separated by 90 degrees and each arrow tip pointed at 45°, 225°, 135°, and 315° respectively, in the x-y plane and relative to the +x-direction. Thus, a tip of each open arrow shape is pointed in a direction that is rotated 90° relative to each adjacent tip. Additionally, first corner conductor **1124***a* and second corner conductor **1124***b* are rotated 180° from each other, and third corner conductor **1124***c* and fourth corner conductor **1124***d* are rotated 180° from each other. First corner conductor **1124***a*, second corner conductor **1124***b*, third corner conductor **1124***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1124***d* are symmetrically distributed relative to each corner of dielectric layer **1110** and have the identical shape and size.

First corner conductor **1124***a* is positioned in an upper right quadrant of the left surface of dielectric layer **1110**. First corner conductor **1124***a* includes a first connecting arm **1118***a*, a first x-arm **1114***a*, and a first y-arm **1116***a*. First x-arm **1114***a* and first y-arm **1116***a* are perpendicular to each other and parallel to the x-axis and the y-axis, respectively. First connecting arm **1118***a* is parallel to a diagonal axis that extends between the upper right corner and the lower left corner formed by rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108**. First x-arm **1114***a* and first y-arm **1116***a* are joined to form the arrowhead shape in the upper right corner of first polarization rotator **202***a*, and first connecting arm **1118***a* is joined to first x-arm **1114***a* and first y-arm **1116***a* to form the shaft that extends from the arrowhead shape toward a center of the left surface. As a result, first connecting arm **1118***a* is aligned with and extends from the tip formed at the intersection of first x-arm **1114***a* and first y-arm **1116***a*. First connecting arm **1118***a*, first x-arm **1114***a*, and first y-arm **1116***a* are used to describe a shape of first corner conductor **1124***a* and typically are not distinct elements but form a single conductive structure. For simplicity of description, first x-arm **1114***a*, first y-arm **1116***a*, and first connecting arm **1118***a* have been described to overlap near the upper right corner though again first connecting arm **1118***a*, first x-arm **1114***a*, and first y-arm **1116***a* typically are not distinct elements, but form a single conductive structure.

Second corner conductor **1124***b* is positioned in a lower left quadrant of the left surface of dielectric layer **1110**. Second corner conductor **1124***b* includes a second connecting arm **1118***b*, a second x-arm **1114***b*, and a second y-arm **1116***b*. Second x-arm **1114***b* and second y-arm **1116***b* are perpendicular to each other and parallel to the x-axis and the y-axis, respectively. Second connecting arm **1118***b* is parallel to the diagonal axis that extends between the upper right corner and the lower left corner formed by rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108**. Second x-arm **1114***b* and second y-arm **1116***b* are joined to form the arrowhead shape in the lower left corner of first polarization rotator **202***a*, and second connecting arm **1118***b* is joined to second x-arm **1114***b* and second y-arm **1116***b* to form the shaft that extends from the arrowhead shape toward the center of the left surface. As a result, second connecting arm **1118***b* is aligned with and extends from the tip formed at the intersection of second x-arm **1114***b* and second y-arm **1116***b*. Second connecting arm **1118***b*, second x-arm **1114***b*, and second y-arm **1116***b* are used to describe a shape of second corner conductor **1124***b* and typically are not distinct elements but form a single conductive structure. For simplicity of description, second x-arm **1114***b*, second y-arm **1116***b*, and second connecting arm **1118***b* have been described to overlap near the lower left corner though again second connecting arm **1118***b*, second x-arm **1114***b*, and second y-arm **1116***b* typically are not distinct elements, but form a single conductive structure.

Third corner conductor **1124***c* is positioned in an upper left quadrant of the right surface of dielectric layer **1110**. Third corner conductor **1124***c* includes a third connecting arm **1118***c*, a third x-arm **1114***c*, and a third y-arm **1116***c*. Third x-arm **1114***c* and third y-arm **1116***c* are perpendicular to each other and parallel to the x-axis and the y-axis, respectively. Third connecting arm **1118***c* is parallel to the diagonal axis that extends between the upper left corner and the lower right corner formed by rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108**. Third x-arm **1114***c* and third y-arm **1116***c* are joined to form the arrowhead shape in the upper left corner of first polarization rotator **202***a*, and third connecting arm **1118***c* is joined to third x-arm **1114***c* and third y-arm **1116***c* to form the shaft that extends from the arrowhead shape toward the center of the right surface. As a result, third connecting arm **1118***c* is aligned with and extends from the tip formed at the intersection of third x-arm **1114**c and third y-arm **1116**c. Third connecting arm **1118**c, third x-arm **1114**c, and third y-arm **1116**c are used to describe a shape of third corner conductor **1124**c and typically are not distinct elements but form a single conductive structure. For simplicity of description, third x-arm **1114**c, third y-arm **1116**c, and third connecting arm **1118**c have been described to overlap near the upper left corner though again third connecting arm **1118**c, third x-arm **1114**c, and third y-arm **1116**c typically are not distinct elements, but form a single conductive structure.

Fourth corner conductor **1124**d is positioned in a lower right quadrant of the right surface of dielectric layer **1110**. Fourth corner conductor **1124**d includes a fourth connecting arm **1118**d, a fourth x-arm **1114**d, and a fourth y-arm **1116**d. Fourth x-arm **1114**d and fourth y-arm **1116**d are perpendicular to each other and parallel to the x-axis and the y-axis, respectively. Fourth connecting arm **1118**d is parallel to the diagonal axis that extends between the upper left corner and the lower right corner formed by rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108**. Fourth x-arm **1114**d and fourth y-arm **1116**d are joined to form the arrowhead shape in the lower right corner of first polarization rotator **202**a, and fourth connecting arm **1118**d is joined to fourth x-arm **1114**d and fourth y-arm **1116**d to form the shaft that extends from the arrowhead shape toward the center of the right surface. As a result, fourth connecting arm **1118**d is aligned with and extends from the tip formed at the intersection of fourth x-arm **1114**d and fourth y-arm **1116**d. Fourth connecting arm **1118**d, fourth x-arm **1114**d, and fourth y-arm **1116**d are used to describe a shape of fourth corner conductor **1124**d and typically are not distinct elements but form a single conductive structure. For simplicity of description, fourth x-arm **1114**d, fourth y-arm **1116**d, and fourth connecting arm **1118**d have been described to overlap near lower left corner **142** though again fourth connecting arm **1118**d, fourth x-arm **1114**d, and fourth y-arm **1116**d typically are not distinct elements, but form a single conductive structure.

Inclusion of first x-arms **1114**a, **1114**b, **1114**c, **1114**d perpendicular to first y-arms **1116**a, **1116**b, **1116**c, **1116**d, respectively, allows phase-shifting waveguide **110** to support polarizations parallel to the x-axis as well as the y-axis.

In an illustrative embodiment, first rotator diode **1120** and second rotator diode **1122** are PIN diodes that provide fast switching. In alternative embodiments, first rotator diode **1120** and second rotator diode **1122** may be replaced with any SPST switch device or other electrical structure that acts as an SPST switch device. Each of first rotator diode **1120** and second rotator diode **1122** form switchable connections that have two states: short referred to as a conducting position, and open referred to as a non-conducting position.

First rotator diode **1120** is connected between a first edge of first connecting arm **1118**a closest to the center of the left surface and a second edge of second connecting arm **1118**b closest to the center of the left surface. First bias line **1124**a is connected to the first tip of first corner conductor **1112**a at the upper right corner of the left surface of first polarization rotator **202**a. Second bias line **1124**b is connected to the second tip of second corner conductor **1112**b at the lower left corner of the left surface of first polarization rotator **202**a. Second bias line **1124**b, second connecting arm **1118**b, first rotator diode **1120**, first connecting arm **1118**a, and first bias line **1124**a form an electrical circuit. First bias line **1124**a and second bias line **1124**b, one of which may be electrically connected to a wall of first polarization rotator **202**a, are used to control the bias state of first rotator diode **1120**. The two connecting arms **1118**a and **1118**b are electrically connected when first rotator diode **1120** is forward biased and electrically isolated when first rotator diode **1120** is reverse biased. The geometrical orientation of first rotator diode **1120** is not important because radio frequency alternating currents can flow to first rotator diode **1120** either way.

Second rotator diode **1122** is connected between a third edge of third connecting arm **1118**c closest to the center of the right surface and a fourth edge of fourth connecting arm **1118**d closest to the center of the right surface. Third bias line **1124**c is connected to the third tip of third corner conductor **1112**c at the upper left corner of the right surface of first polarization rotator **202**a. Fourth bias line **1124**d is connected to the fourth tip of fourth corner conductor **1112**d at the lower right corner of the right surface of first polarization rotator **202**a. Third bias line **1124**c, third connecting arm **1118**c, second rotator diode **1122**, fourth connecting arm **1118**d, and fourth bias line **1124**d form an electrical circuit. Third bias line **1124**c and fourth bias line **1124**d, one of which may be electrically connected to a wall of first polarization rotator **202**a, are used to control the bias state of second rotator diode **1122**. The two connecting arms **1118**c and **1118**d are electrically connected when second rotator diode **1122** is forward biased and electrically isolated when second rotator diode **1122** is reverse biased. The geometrical orientation of second rotator diode **1122** is not important because radio frequency alternating currents can flow to second rotator diode **1122** either way.

An electrical path length of first connecting arm **1118**a, of second connecting arm **1118**b, of third connecting arm **1118**c, and of fourth connecting arm **1118**d is approximately $\lambda_0/4$ (a quarter of the wavelength), where λ_0 is the wavelength in free space at the frequency of operation. A combined electrical path length of third bias line **1124**c, second rotator diode **1122**, and fourth bias line **1124**d and of second bias line **1124**b, first rotator diode **1120**, and first bias line **1124**a may be in the range from $\lambda_0/100$ to $\lambda_0/5$. A combined electrical path length of second bias line **1124**b, second connecting arm **1118**b, first rotator diode **1120**, first connecting arm **1118**a, and first bias line **1124**a is approximately $\lambda_0/2$ (a half of the wavelength), where λ_0 is the wavelength in free space at the frequency of operation. Similarly, a combined electrical path length of third bias line **1124**c, third connecting arm **1118**c, second rotator diode **1122**, fourth connecting arm **1118**d, and fourth bias line **1124**d is approximately $\lambda_0/2$.

First bias line **1124**a, second bias line **1124**b, third bias line **1124**c, and fourth bias line **1124**d are connected to controller **108** that selectively provides a third direct current signal that puts first rotator diode **1120** in forward bias and second rotator diode **1122** in reverse bias or provides a fourth signal that puts second rotator diode **1122** in forward bias and first rotator diode **1120** in reverse bias. Application of the third signal allows strong induced electrical currents to flow on second connecting arm **1118**b and first connecting arm **1118**a along the diagonal axis that extends between the lower left corner and the upper right corner formed by rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108** of polarization rotator **202** when it is illuminated with an x-polarized or y-polarized wave from reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**. As a result, the polarization of the E^{inDWG} is rotated by 90° with respect to E^{inPR}. Application of the fourth signal allows strong induced electrical currents to flow on fourth connecting arm **1118**d and third connecting arm **1118**c along the diagonal axis that extends between the lower right corner and the upper left corner formed by rotator top wall **1102**, rotator right side wall **1104**, rotator bottom wall **1106**, and rotator left side wall **1108** of polarization rotator **202** when it is illuminated with an x-polarized or y-polarized wave from reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**. As a result, the polarization of the E^{inDWG} is rotated by −90° with respect to E^{inPR}.

Referring to FIG. 11B, a perspective side view is shown of a second polarization rotator **202***b* is shown in accordance with a second illustrative embodiment. First corner conductor **1124***a*, second corner conductor **1124***b*, third corner conductor **1124***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1124***d* of first polarization rotator **202***a* have straight edges. First corner conductor **1124***a*, second corner conductor **1124***b*, third corner conductor **1124***c*, and fourth corner conductor **1124***d* of second polarization rotator **202***b* include curved edges.

Referring to FIG. **12**, an input electrical field and a corresponding output electric field are shown that were generated based on an operating mode of first reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* and of polarization rotator **202***a* in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. The table below shows an illustrative bit configuration generated based on the options discussed above:

First diode 700/plate 704 position	Second diode 702/plate 704 position	First rotator diode 1120	Second rotator diode 1122	Bit state	Relative phases of E^{out}
OFF/DOWN	OFF/DOWN	ON	OFF	00	90°
ON/UP	ON/UP	ON	OFF	01	0°
OFF/DOWN	OFF/DOWN	OFF	ON	10	−90°
ON/UP	ON/UP	OFF	ON	11	180°

Of course, the bit configurations can be defined in other manners to distinguish the four operating states of phase-shifting waveguide **110**. A first phasor **1200** is generated by the first signal, and a second phasor **1202** is generated by the second signal. A third phasor **12044** is generated by the third signal, and a fourth phasor **1206** is generated by the fourth signal. Second double-ridge waveguide **204** provides a horizontal polarization to generate electrical field output E^{out} that is horizontally polarized with the resulting phase shift of 0°, 90°, 180°, or 270° relative to the phase of electrical field input E^{in}.

Referring to FIG. **13**, a simulated x-y transmission coefficient is shown that was generated by phase-shifting waveguide **110** as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. The simulated phase-shifting waveguide **110** was based on aluminum material. Cross-section width **414** and cross-section height **416** of phase-shifting waveguide **110** were 12 millimeters (mm)×12 mm. Ridge width **802** and gap between ridges **804** were 5 mm and 2 mm, respectively. 0.254 mm RO4003C with a dielectric constant of 3.55 and a loss tangent of 0.0027 was used for polarization rotator **202**. First predefined length **502** and third predefined length **904** were 2 mm, and second predefined length **800** and fourth predefined length **1000** were 0.8 mm for the two different states of reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200**.

A first x-y transmission coefficient curve **1300** is shown for bit state 00, a second x-y transmission coefficient curve **1302** is shown for bit state 01, a second x-y transmission coefficient curve **1304** is shown for bit state 10, a fourth x-y transmission coefficient curve **1306** is shown for bit state 11. Referring to FIG. **14**, a simulated x-y transmission phase response is shown that was generated by phase-shifting waveguide **110** as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. A first x-y transmission phase response curve **1400** is shown for bit state 00, a second x-y transmission phase response curve **1402** is shown for bit state 01, a second x-y transmission phase response curve **1404** is shown for bit state 10, a fourth x-y transmission phase response curve **1406** is shown for bit state 11. Phase-shifting waveguide **110** exhibited a wide operating bandwidth of almost an octave over which the co-polarization transmission coefficients were greater than −2 dB, and the transmission phases were within +/−15° of corresponding desired values for the four operating states.

Referring to FIG. **15**, a simulated y-y transmission coefficient is shown that was generated by first reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. A first y-y transmission coefficient curve **1500** is shown for a 0° phase rotation, and a second y-y transmission coefficient curve **1502** is shown for a 90° phase rotation. Referring to FIG. **16**, a simulated y-y transmission phase response is shown that was generated by first reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. A first y-y transmission phase response curve **1600** is shown for a 0° phase rotation, and a second y-y transmission phase response curve **1602** is shown for a 90° phase rotation. First reconfigurable double-ridge waveguide **200***a* achieved approximately 90° of phase shift over the frequency range of 6 to 12 gigahertz (GHz) with y-polarization transmission coefficients greater than −1 dB.

Referring to FIG. **17**, a simulated x-y transmission coefficient and a simulated y-y reflection coefficient are shown that was generated by first polarization rotator **202***a* as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. An x-y transmission coefficient curve **1700** and an x-y reflection coefficient curve **1702** are shown. Referring to FIG. **18**, a simulated x-y transmission phase response is shown that was generated by first polarization rotator **202***a* as a function of frequency in accordance with an illustrative embodiment. A first x-y transmission phase response curve **1600** is shown for the third signal, and a second x-y transmission phase response curve **1602** is shown for the fourth signal. First polarization rotator **202***a* achieved approximately 180° of phase shift over the frequency range of 6 to 12 gigahertz (GHz) with cross-polarization transmission coefficients greater than −1 dB.

As used herein, the term “mount” includes join, unite, connect, couple, associate, insert, hang, hold, affix, attach, fasten, bind, paste, secure, bolt, screw, rivet, solder, weld, glue, form over, form in, layer, mold, rest on, rest against, etch, abut, and other like terms. The phrases “mounted on”, “mounted to”, and equivalent phrases indicate any interior or exterior portion of the element referenced. These phrases also encompass direct mounting (in which the referenced elements are in direct contact) and indirect mounting (in which the referenced elements are not in direct contact, but are connected through an intermediate element). Elements referenced as mounted to each other herein may further be integrally formed together, for example, using a molding or a thermoforming process as understood by a person of skill in the art. As a result, elements described herein as being mounted to each other need not be discrete structural elements. The elements may be mounted permanently, removably, or releasably unless specified otherwise.

The word “illustrative” is used herein to mean serving as an example, instance, or illustration. Any aspect or design described herein as “illustrative” is not necessarily to be construed as preferred or advantageous over other aspects or designs. Further, for the purposes of this disclosure and unless otherwise specified, "a" or "an" means "one or more". Still further, using "and" or "or" in the detailed description is intended to include "and/or" unless specifically indicated otherwise. The illustrative embodiments may be implemented as a method, apparatus, or article of manufacture using standard programming and/or engineering techniques to produce software, firmware, hardware, or any combination thereof to control a computer to implement the disclosed embodiments.

Any directional references used herein, such as left-side, right-side, top, bottom, back, front, up, down, above, below, etc., are for illustration only based on the orientation in the drawings selected to describe the illustrative embodiments.

The foregoing description of illustrative embodiments of the disclosed subject matter has been presented for purposes of illustration and of description. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the disclosed subject matter to the precise form disclosed, and modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teachings or may be acquired from practice of the disclosed subject matter. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to explain the principles of the disclosed subject matter and as practical applications of the disclosed subject matter to enable one skilled in the art to utilize the disclosed subject matter in various embodiments and with various modifications as suited to the particular use contemplated.

What is claimed is:

1. A waveguide comprising:

a first double-ridge waveguide formed of a first electrically conductive material, wherein the first double-ridge waveguide is configured to generate a first electric field having a first polarization in response to an input electrical field having the first polarization or to generate a second electric field having the first polarization in response to the input electrical field, wherein a first phase of the first electric field is rotated 0 degrees relative to a phase of the input electrical field when the input electrical field is applied to the first double-ridge waveguide, wherein a second phase of the second electric field is rotated 90 degrees relative to the phase of the input electrical field when the input electrical field is applied to the first double-ridge waveguide;

a second double-ridge waveguide formed of a second electrically conductive material, wherein the second double-ridge waveguide is configured to generate a third electric field with a polarization that is perpendicular to the first polarization; and

a polarization rotator mounted between the first double-ridge waveguide and the second double-ridge waveguide, wherein the polarization rotator comprises

a frame;

a dielectric layer including a first dielectric surface and a second dielectric surface formed within the frame, wherein the first dielectric surface is on an opposite side of the dielectric layer relative to the second dielectric surface, wherein the first dielectric surface is mounted adjacent an output side of the first double-ridge waveguide, wherein the second dielectric surface is mounted adjacent an input side of the second double-ridge waveguide, wherein the dielectric layer is formed of a dielectric material;

a first conducting pattern layer formed of a third electrically conductive material mounted to the first dielectric surface, wherein the first conducting pattern layer includes a first conductor and a second conductor;

a first switch connected between the first conductor and the second conductor to electrically connect the first conductor to the second conductor or to electrically disconnect the first conductor from the second conductor;

a second conducting pattern layer formed of a fourth electrically conductive material mounted to the second dielectric surface, wherein the second conducting pattern layer includes a third conductor and a fourth conductor; and

a second switch connected between the third conductor and the fourth conductor to electrically connect the third conductor to the fourth conductor or to electrically disconnect the third conductor from the fourth conductor,

wherein, when the first switch electrically connects the first conductor to the second conductor, the second switch electrically disconnects the third conductor from the fourth conductor to define a first mode of the polarization rotator,

wherein, when the second switch electrically connects the third conductor to the fourth conductor, the first switch electrically disconnects the first conductor from the second conductor to define a second mode of the polarization rotator,

wherein the first mode is configured to rotate the first phase of the first electric field or the second phase of the second electric field by 90 degrees,

wherein the second mode is configured to rotate the first phase of the first electric field or the second phase of the second electric field by −90 degrees.

2. The waveguide of claim **1**, wherein at least one of the first electrically conductive material, the second electrically conductive material, the third electrically conductive material, and the fourth electrically conductive material is a different electrically conductive material.

3. The waveguide of claim **1**, wherein the first switch and the second switch are single pole, single throw switches.

4. The waveguide of claim **1**, wherein the first switch comprises:

a diode connected between the first conductor and the second conductor;

a first bias line connected to a first end of the first conductor opposite where the diode is connected to the first conductor; and

a second bias line connected to a first end of the second conductor opposite where the diode is connected to the second conductor.

5. The waveguide of claim **4**, wherein the diode is a PIN diode.

6. The waveguide of claim **1**, wherein the first conductor, the second conductor, the third conductor, and the fourth conductor each have a crossed-dipole shape.

7. The waveguide of claim **1**, wherein the first conductor, the second conductor, the third conductor, and the fourth conductor each have an arrow shape comprised of a first arrow tip arm, a second arrow tip arm, and a shaft.

8. The waveguide of claim **7**, wherein the first arrow tip arm is perpendicular to the second arrow tip arm.

9. The waveguide of claim **7**, wherein the shaft of the first conductor is rotated by 180 degrees relative to the second conductor, the shaft of the third conductor is rotated by 180 degrees relative to the fourth conductor, the shaft of the third conductor is rotated by 90 degrees relative to the first conductor, and the shaft of the third conductor is rotated by 90 degrees relative to the fourth conductor.

10. The waveguide of claim 7, wherein each arrow shape of the first conductor and the second conductor is pointed outward from a center of the first dielectric surface and each arrow shape of the third conductor and the fourth conductor is pointed outward from a center of the second dielectric surface.

11. The waveguide of claim 10, wherein the first switch comprises:

a diode connected between a first location on the first conductor and a second location on the second conductor, wherein the first location is an end of the shaft of the first conductor opposite a tip of the first conductor and the second location is an end of the shaft of the second conductor opposite a tip of the second conductor;

a first bias line connected to the tip of the first conductor; and

a second bias line connected to the tip of the second conductor.

12. The waveguide of claim 11, wherein a voltage applied to the first bias line or to the second bias line controls whether the first switch electrically connects the first conductor to the second conductor or electrically disconnects the first conductor from the second conductor.

13. The waveguide of claim 10, wherein the frame has four walls that join to form a polygon, wherein a tip of the arrow shape of the first conductor, of the second conductor, of the third conductor, and of the fourth conductor is pointed toward a different corner of the frame, wherein each wall of the four walls is parallel to a wall of the first double-ridge waveguide.

14. The waveguide of claim 1, wherein a first electrical path length of the first conductor and the second conductor when the first switch electrically connects the first conductor to the second conductor is approximately a half of a wavelength $\lambda_0/2$, where $\lambda_0=c/f_0$, where c is a speed of light, and f_0 is a central operating frequency of the input electrical field.

15. The waveguide of claim 1, wherein the second double-ridge waveguide comprises:

a top wall, a right side wall, a bottom wall, and a left side wall mounted to each other to form a hollow polygon;

a first ridge that extends perpendicularly to the left from the right side wall toward the left side wall; and

a second ridge that extends perpendicularly to the right from the left side wall toward the right side wall.

16. The waveguide of claim 1, wherein the first double-ridge waveguide comprises:

a top wall, a right side wall, a bottom wall, and a left side wall mounted to each other to form a hollow polygon;

a first ridge that extends perpendicularly down from the top wall toward the bottom wall, wherein a plurality of teeth is formed in the first ridge that are open toward the bottom wall;

a second ridge that extends perpendicularly up from the bottom wall toward the top wall;

an actuator mounted to the second ridge; and

a plate formed of a fifth electrically conductive material mounted parallel to a top surface of the second ridge, the plate mounted to the actuator, wherein the actuator is configured to move the plate toward or away from the plurality of teeth.

17. The waveguide of claim 16, comprising a second actuator, wherein the actuator is mounted to a first end of the plate, and the second actuator is mounted to a second end of the plate opposite the first end, wherein the second actuator is configured to move the plate toward or away from the plurality of teeth in combination with the actuator to maintain the plate parallel to the top surface of the second ridge.

18. The waveguide of claim 16, wherein, when the plate is moved to a first position relative to the second ridge, the first electric field is generated, and, when the plate is moved to a second position relative to the second ridge, the second electric field is generated.

19. The waveguide of claim 1, wherein the first double-ridge waveguide comprises:

a top wall, a right side wall, a bottom wall, and a left side wall mounted to each other to form a hollow polygon;

a first ridge that extends perpendicularly down from the top wall toward the bottom wall, wherein a plurality of teeth is formed in the first ridge that are open toward the bottom wall;

a second ridge that extends perpendicularly up from the bottom wall toward the top wall;

a plate formed of a fifth electrically conductive material mounted parallel to a top surface of the second ridge between the plurality of teeth and the top surface of the second ridge;

a first diode connected to the plate at a first end; and

a second diode connected to the plate at a second end opposite the first end,

wherein, when the first diode and the second diode provide electrical current to the plate, the first electric field is generated, and, when the first diode and the second diode do not provide electrical current to the plate, the second electric field is generated.

20. A phased array antenna comprising:

a transmitter;

a plurality of radiating antennas; and

a plurality of waveguides wherein each waveguide of the plurality of waveguides is mounted to receive electrical energy from the transmitter and to provide electrical energy to a respective radiating antenna of the plurality of radiating antennas, wherein each waveguide of the plurality of waveguides comprises

a first double-ridge waveguide formed of a first electrically conductive material, wherein the first double-ridge waveguide is configured to generate a first electric field having a first polarization in response to an input electrical field having the first polarization or to generate a second electric field having the first polarization in response to the input electrical field, wherein a first phase of the first electric field is rotated 0 degrees relative to a phase of the input electrical field when the input electrical field is applied to the first double-ridge waveguide, wherein a second phase of the second electric field is rotated 90 degrees relative to the phase of the input electrical field when the input electrical field is applied to the first double-ridge waveguide;

a second double-ridge waveguide formed of a second electrically conductive material, wherein the second double-ridge waveguide is configured to generate a third electric field with a polarization that is perpendicular to the first polarization; and

a polarization rotator mounted between the first double-ridge waveguide and the second double-ridge waveguide, wherein the polarization rotator comprises

a frame;

a dielectric layer including a first dielectric surface and a second dielectric surface formed within the frame, wherein the first dielectric surface is on an opposite side of the dielectric layer relative to the second dielectric surface, wherein the first dielectric surface is mounted adjacent an output side of the first double-ridge waveguide, wherein the second dielectric surface is mounted adjacent an input side of the second double-ridge waveguide, wherein the dielectric layer is formed of a dielectric material;

a first conducting pattern layer formed of a third electrically conductive material mounted to the first dielectric surface, wherein the first conducting pattern layer includes a first conductor and a second conductor;

a first switch connected between the first conductor and the second conductor to electrically connect the first conductor to the second conductor or to electrically disconnect the first conductor from the second conductor;

a second conducting pattern layer formed of a fourth electrically conductive material mounted to the second dielectric surface, wherein the second conducting pattern layer includes a third conductor and a fourth conductor; and

a second switch connected between the third conductor and the fourth conductor to electrically connect the third conductor to the fourth conductor or to electrically disconnect the third conductor from the fourth conductor,

wherein, when the first switch electrically connects the first conductor to the second conductor, the second switch electrically disconnects the third conductor from the fourth conductor to define a first mode of the polarization rotator,

wherein, when the second switch electrically connects the third conductor to the fourth conductor, the first switch electrically disconnects the first conductor from the second conductor to define a second mode of the polarization rotator,

wherein the first mode is configured to rotate the first phase of the first electric field or the second phase of the second electric field by 90 degrees,

wherein the second mode is configured to rotate the first phase of the first electric field or the second phase of the second electric field by −90 degrees.

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