AN11243 Failure signature of electrical overstress on power MOSFETs Rev. 02 — 19 December 2017 Application not **Application note**

Document information

Information	Content
Keywords	Power MOSFETs, Electrical Overstress (EOS), Unclamped Inductive Switching (UIS)
Abstract	When Power MOSFETs fail, there is often extensive damage. Examination of the size and location of the burn mark, the failure signature, provides information about the type of fault condition which caused the failure. This document provides a catalogue of failure signatures from common electrical overstress failure modes. The catalogue can be used in forensic investigation of the underlying root cause of failure to improve module design and reliability.

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1 Introduction

Power MOSFETs are used to switch high voltages and currents, while minimizing their own internal power dissipation. Under fault conditions however, it is possible to apply voltage, current and power exceeding the MOSFET capability. Fault conditions can be either due to an electrical circuit failure or a mechanical fault with a load such as a seized motor. This leads to Electrical Overstress (EOS). Typically the consequence of EOS is the short circuiting of at least 2 of the 3 MOSFET terminals (gate, drain, source). In addition, high local power dissipation in the MOSFET leads to MOSFET damage which manifests as burn marks, die crack and in extreme cases as plastic encapsulation damage.

Examination of the size and location of the burn mark, the failure signature, provides information about the type of fault condition which caused the failure. Common fault conditions are:

- ElectroStatic Discharge (ESD)
- Unclamped Inductive Switching (UIS) commonly called Avalanche or Ruggedness
- Linear Mode operation
- Over-current

Packaged MOSFETs have been deliberately destroyed under these conditions. Images recorded of the ensuing burn marks on the silicon surface, provide a 'Rogue's Gallery' to aid the explanation of EOS failures.

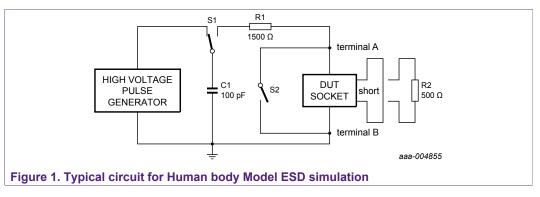
<u>Section 1.1</u> to <u>Section 1.4</u> gives an overview of the common failure signatures.

Appendices in <u>Section 2.1</u> to <u>Section 2.17</u> provide further images.

1.1 ESD - Human body model

1.1.1 EOS method

ESD pulses were applied using a standard Human-body Model ESD circuit; for details see *AEC* - *Q101* - *REV* - *May 15, 1996*. Voltage of the applied pulse was progressively increased until device failure was observed.



1.1.2 Fault condition simulated

Human body model ESD simulates situations when a voltage spike is applied to the MOSFET exceeding the maximum voltage that can be sustained by the gate oxide of either gate-source or gate-drain. The pulse is applied with 1500 Ω series resistance between the voltage origin and the MOSFET, which limits the rate of rise of the MOSFET gate voltage. Either human handling, electrical test equipment or malfunctioning circuits can easily apply such voltage pulses.

1.1.3 Signature

Failure site is found in an edge cell of the MOSFET structure. Outer edge cells and cells near the gate are the first to be subjected to the incoming voltage pulse and are thus the first sites where the voltage exceeds the gate-oxide capability. The signature differs from Machine Model failures in that the fail site does not show such a strong tendency to group near the gate, due to the slower rise in gate voltage.

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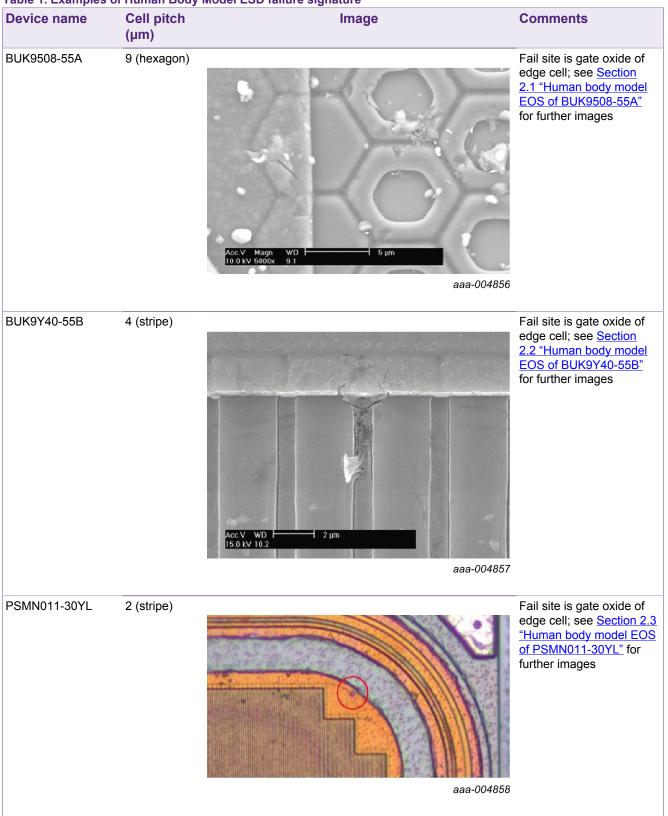


Table 1. Examples of Human Body Model ESD failure signature

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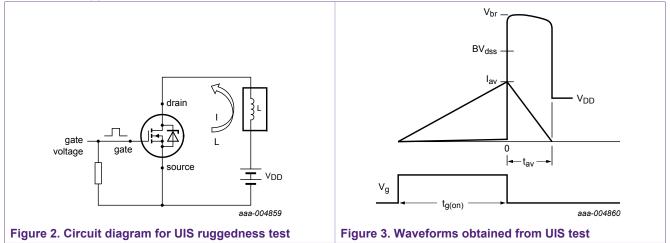
Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
PSMN8R5-100PSF	2.5 (stripe)		Fail site is gate oxide of edge cell, see <u>Section 2.4</u> "Human body model EOS of PSMN8R5-100PSF" for further images.
BUK7Y3R0-40H	1.5 (stripe)		Fail site is gate oxide of edge cell, see <u>Section 2.5</u> "Human body model EOS of BUK7Y3R0-40H" for further images.

1.2 Unclamped Inductive Switching (UIS) (Avalanche or Ruggedness)

1.2.1 EOS method

Inductive energy pulses were applied using a standard UIS circuit; for details see *AEC - Q101-004 - REV - May 15, 1996*. A fixed inductance value is selected. Current in the inductor prior to switching the MOSFET was progressively increased until device failure was observed.

Table 2. UIS ruggedness test circuit and waveforms



1.2.2 Fault condition simulated

UIS simulates situations when a MOSFET is switched off in a circuit in which there is inductance. The inductance can be deliberate (such as an injector coil in a diesel engine system), or parasitic. As the current cannot decay to zero instantaneously through the inductance, the MOSFET source-drain voltage increases to take the device into avalanche breakdown. The energy stored in the inductance is then dissipated in the MOSFET.

1.2.3 Signature

Failure site is found in an active MOSFET cell. The burn-mark is usually round in shape, indicating a central failure site and subsequent thermal damage.

If the avalanche event is long in duration (~ ms), then burn marks locate at central sites on the die, where there is maximum current flow and reduced heat dissipation. The sites are often adjacent to wire bonds/clip bonds where current density is high, but not directly under the wire bond/clip bond as it provides a local heat sink. Failure is at the hottest location of the die. For short avalanche events

For short avalanche events (~ μ s), the burn marks can take on more random locations over the die surface. The temperature rise in the chip is more uniform with negligible chance for current crowding and local heating on these time scales. For even shorter avalanche events, the burn marks can locate at die corners due to the discontinuity in cell structure at these locations.

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Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
BUK7L06-34ARC	9 (hexagon)	<image/> <caption></caption>	round burn in active area; see <u>Section 2.6</u> <u>"Unclamped inductive</u> <u>switching EOS of</u> <u>BUK7L06-34ARC"</u> for further images
BUK9Y40-55B	4 (stripe)	<image/> <image/>	round burn in active area; see <u>Section 2.7</u> <u>"Unclamped Inductive</u> <u>Switching EOS of</u> <u>BUK9Y40-55B</u> " for further images
PSMN7R0-30YL	2 (stripe)	<image/> <image/>	round burn in active area; see <u>Section 2.8</u> <u>"Unclamped inductive</u> <u>switching EOS of</u> <u>PSMN7R0-30YL"</u> for further images

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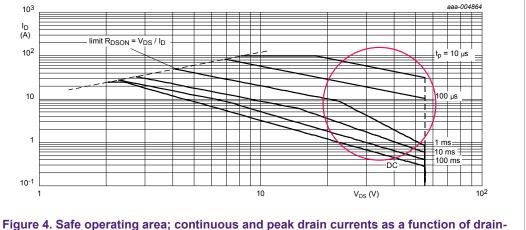
Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
PSMN8R5-100PSF	2.5 (stripe)		Round burn in active area; see <u>Section 2.9</u> <u>"Unclamped inductive</u> <u>switching EOS of</u> <u>PSMN8R5-100PSF"</u> for further images.
BUK7Y3R0-40H	1.5 (stripe)		Round burn in active area; see <u>Section 2.10</u> <u>"Unclamped inductive</u> <u>switching EOS of</u> <u>BUK7Y3R0-40H"</u> for further images.

1.3 Linear mode operation

1.3.1 EOS method

A Safe Operating Area (SOA) graph is included in all power MOSFET data sheets. Outside the defined safe region, the power dissipated in the FET cannot be removed, resulting in heating beyond the device capability and then device failure.

MOSFETs were taken and a fixed source-drain voltage applied. Current pulses of defined duration were applied and the current was increased until MOSFET failure was observed.



source voltage

1.3.2 Fault condition simulated

Linear mode operation is common during device switching or clamped inductive switching and is not a fault condition unless the SOA is exceeded. Linear mode EOS simulates situations when a MOSFET is operated in Linear mode for too long. This situation can also occur if, when intending to turn the FET on, the gate signal voltage to the FET is too low. This condition can also arise when intending to hold the FET in the Off-state with high drain-source voltage. If the gate connection is lost, the gate voltage capacitively rises and the same Linear mode fault condition occurs

1.3.3 Signature

The hottest location of the die is a failure site that is usually at central sites on the die. The center of the die is where there is maximum current flow and reduced heat dissipation. The sites are often adjacent to wire bonds/clip bonds where current density is high, but not directly under the wire bond/clip bond as it provides a local heat sink.

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Table 4. Examples of linear mode failure signature

Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
BUK7L06-34ARC	9 (hexagon)	<image/> <image/>	Burns located in center of die adjacent to wire- bonds; see <u>Section 2.11</u> <u>"Linear mode EOS of</u> <u>BUK7L06-34ARC"</u> for further images
BUK9Y40-55B	4 (stripe)	<image/> <image/>	Burn adjacent to location of clip bond in center of die; see Section 2.12 "Linear mode EOS of BUK9Y40-55B" for further images

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Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
PSMN7R0-30YL	2 (stripe)	<image/> <image/>	Burn adjacent to location of clip bond in center of die; see <u>Section 2.13</u> <u>"Linear mode EOS of</u> <u>PSMN7R0-30YL"</u> for further images

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Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
PSMN8R5-100PSF	2.5 (stripe)		Burn between source bond wires in active area, see <u>Section 2.18</u> "Linear mode EOS of <u>PSMN8R5-100PSF"</u> for further images.
BUK7Y3R0-40H	1.5 (stripe)		Burn close to the source clip location in the active area, see Section 2.19 "Linear mode EOS of BUK7Y3R0-40H" for further images.

1.4 Over-current

1.4.1 EOS method

The maximum current-handling capability is specified on the data sheet for Power MOSFETs. This capability is based on the current handling capability of wires or clips, before which fusing will onset, combined with the ability to dissipate heat. Exceeding this rating can result in catastrophic failure.

				\frown	
ID	drain current	V _{GS} = 10 V; T _{mb} = 100 °C; see Figure 1	- /	53	A
		V _{GS} = 10 V; T _{mb} = 25 °C; see Figure 1	-	76	А
I _{DM}	peak drain current	$t_p \le 10 \ \mu s$; pulsed; $T_{mb} = 25 \ ^{\circ}C$; see Figure 3	-	260	A
				a	aa-005071

Figure 5. Example of maximum current rating from the data sheet of PSMN7R0-30YL

1.4.2 Fault condition simulated

Over-current occurs if a FET is turned on with no element in the circuit to limit the current, resulting in a supply voltage being applied fully over the drain-source terminals of the FET. Typically this occurs if a load has been short-circuited. Alternatively if 2 FETs are operating in a half-bridge, over-current can ensue if both are turned on together.

1.4.3 Signature

Failure site is initially where the current handling connections (wires or clips) meet the die. Normally damage is extensive however in over-current conditions, and spreads over the entire die surface with evidence of melted metallization and solder joints.

For wire-bonded packages, there is often evidence of fused wires. For clip-bonded packages, die crack is commonly observed.

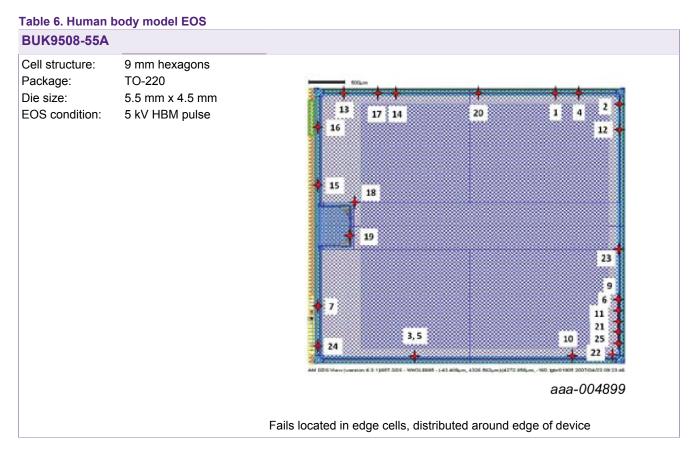
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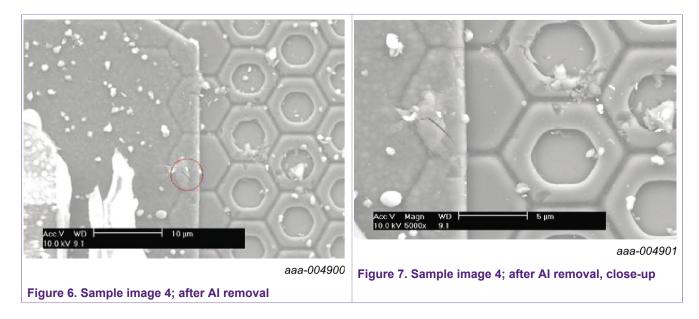
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Table 5. Examples of over-current failure signature

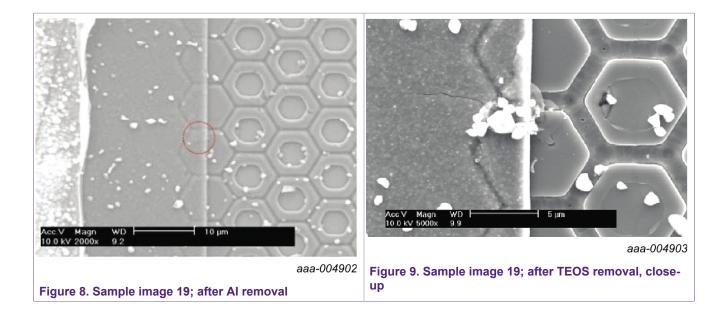
Device name	Cell pitch (µm)	Image	Comments
BUK7L06-34ARC	9 (hexagon)	<image/> <image/>	Burns located in center of die adjacent to wire- bonds. Secondary damage of remelted top metal and solder die attach; see <u>Section 2.14</u> <u>"Over-current EOS of</u> <u>BUK7L06-34ARC"</u> for further images
PSMN7R0-30YL	2 (stripe)	<image/> <image/> <caption></caption>	Burn adjacent to location of clip bond in center of die; see <u>Section 2.15</u> <u>"Over-current EOS of</u> <u>PSMN7R0-30YL"</u> for further images

2 Appendices



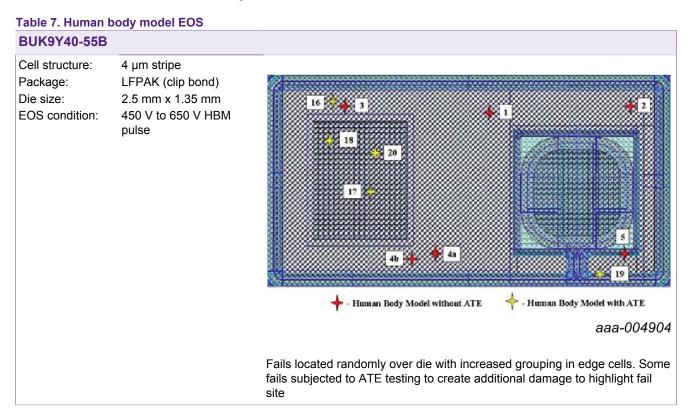


2.1 Human Body Model EOS of BUK9508-55A

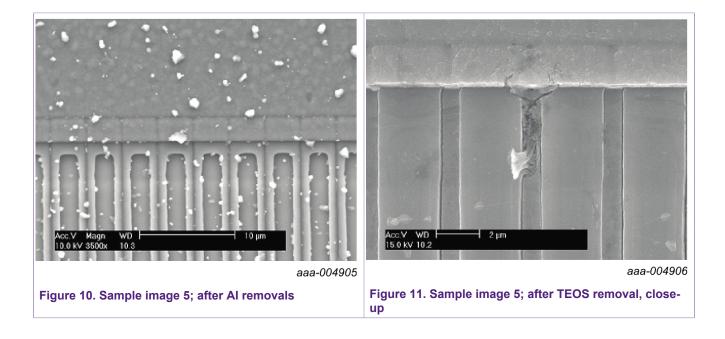


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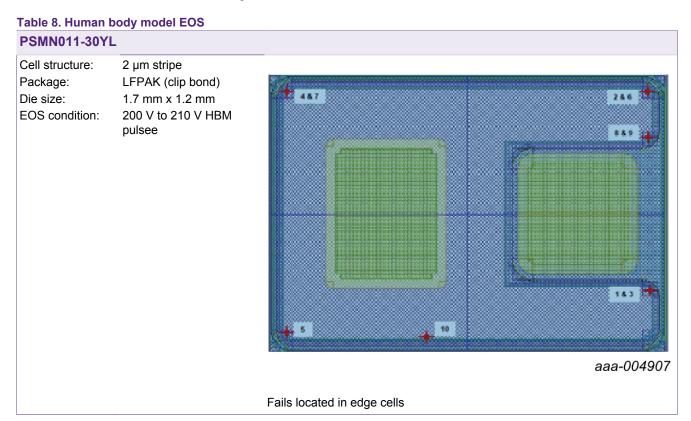
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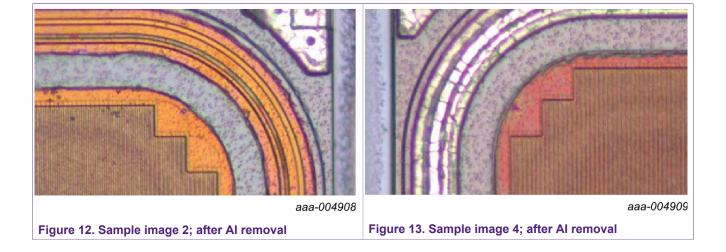
2.2 Human Body Model EOS of BUK9Y40-55B



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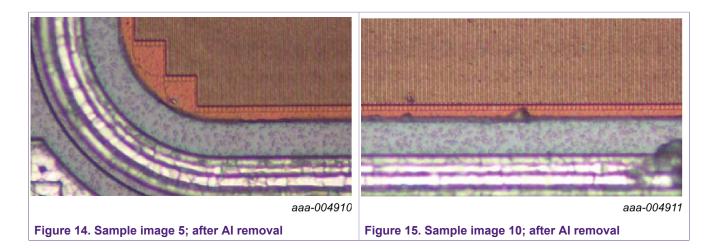


2.3 Human Body Model EOS of PSMN011-30YL



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2.4 Human Body Model EOS of PSMN8R5-100PSF

Table 9. Human	body	model	EOS
PSMN8R5-100	PSF		

Cell structure:	2.5 µm stripe
Package:	SOT78
Die size:	4 mm x 2.67 mm
EOS condition:	1.4 kV to 1.8 kV HBM pulse



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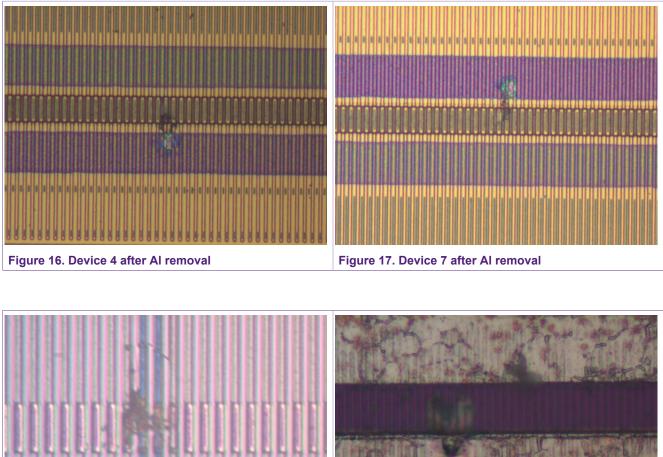




Figure 18. Device 5 after TEOS removal

Figure 19. Device 10 following decapsulation

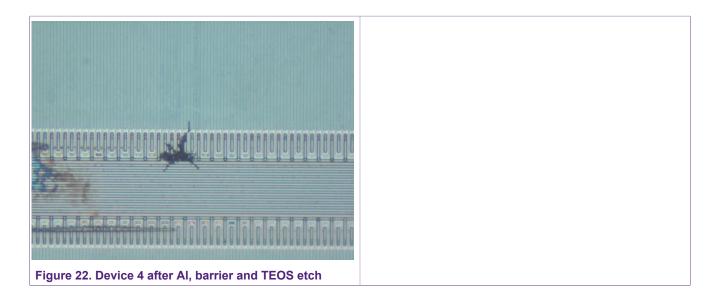
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2.5 Human Body Model EOS of BUK7Y3R0-40H



Figure 20. Device 2 after AI, barrier and TEOS etch

Figure 21. Device 3 after AI, barrier and TEOS etch



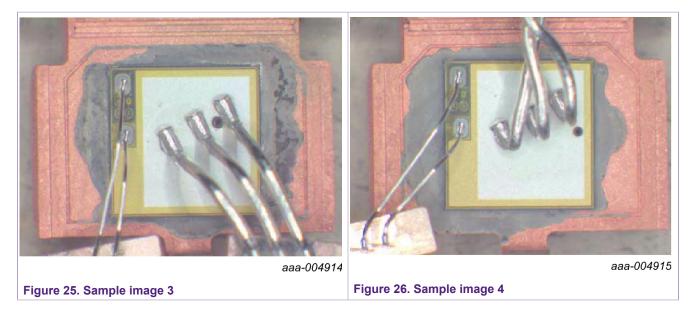
2.6 Unclamped Inductive Switching EOS of BUK7L06-34ARC

Table 11. Unclamped BUK7L06-34ARC	inductive switchin	
Cell structure: Package: Die size: EOS condition:	9 mm hexagons TO-220 (clip bond) 4.3 mm x 4.3 mm 0.2 mH; 80 A to 110 A	Small round burn marks, randomly distributed over active area, close to but not directly under wire-bonds



Figure 23. Sample image 1

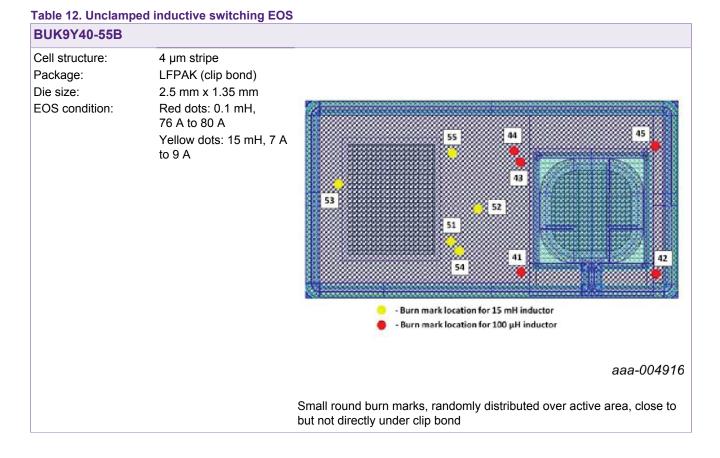
Figure 24. Sample image 2



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2.7 Unclamped Inductive Switching EOS of BUK9Y40-55B



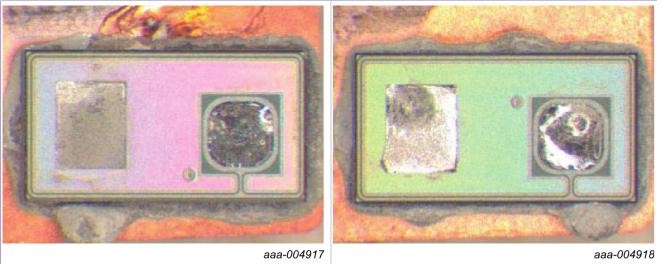


Figure 27. Sample image 41; 0.1 mH

Figure 28. Sample image 43; 0.1 mH

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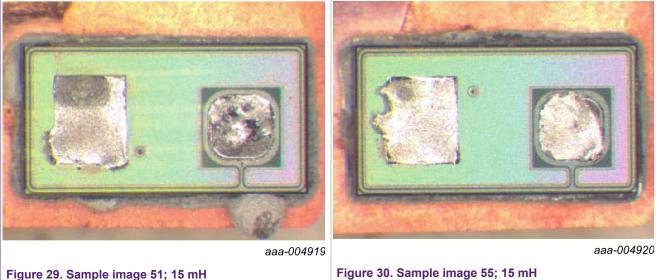
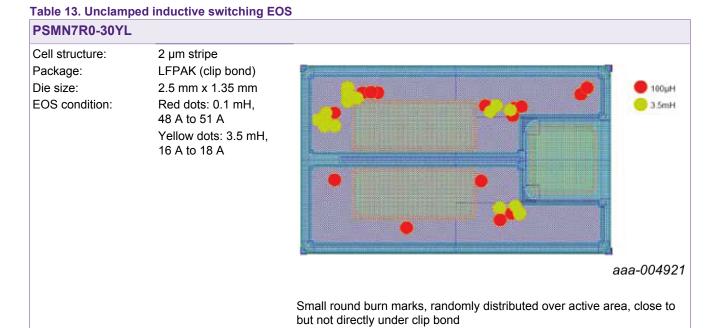
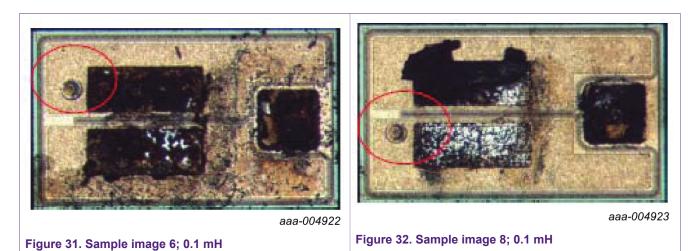


Figure 29. Sample image 51; 15 mH

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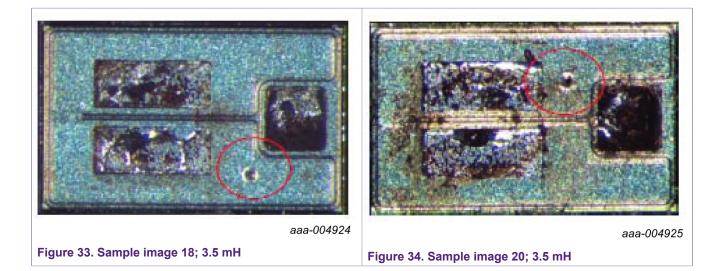
2.8 Unclamped Inductive Switching EOS of PSMN7R0-30YL





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2.9 Unclamped Inductive Switching EOS of PSMN8R5-100PSF

Table 14.	Unclamped	inductive	switching	EOS
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 PSMN8R5-100PSF

 Cell structure:
 2.5 μm stripe

 Package:
 SOT78

 Die size:
 4 mm x 2.67 mm

 EOS condition:
 Teal dot – 25 mH

 Orange dot – 100 uH

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Figure 35. Device 1 upper (orange) hotspot



Figure 36. Device 1 lower (orange) hotspot

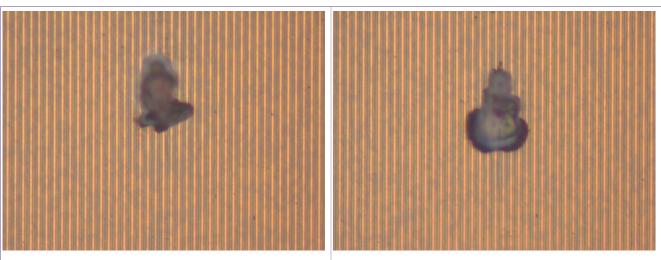


Figure 37. Device 4 upper (orange) hotspot

Figure 38. Device 4 lower (orange) hotspot

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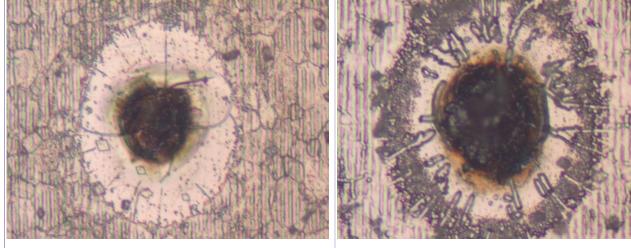


Figure 39. Device 6 (teal) hotspot

Figure 40. Device 7 (teal) hotspot

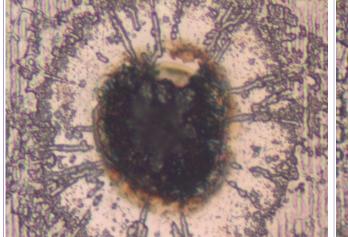


Figure 41. Device 8 (teal) hotspot

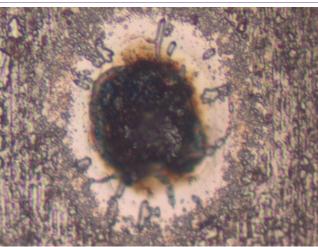


Figure 42. Device 9 (teal) hotspot

2.10 Unclamped Inductive Switching EOS of BUK7Y3R0-40H



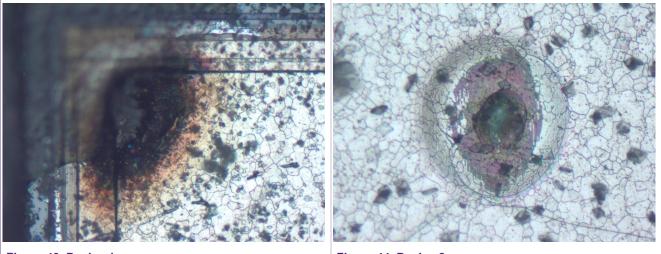
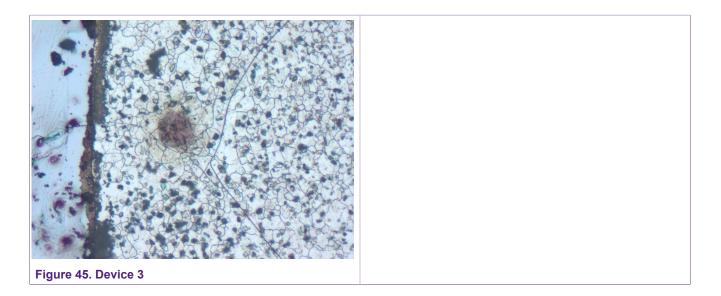


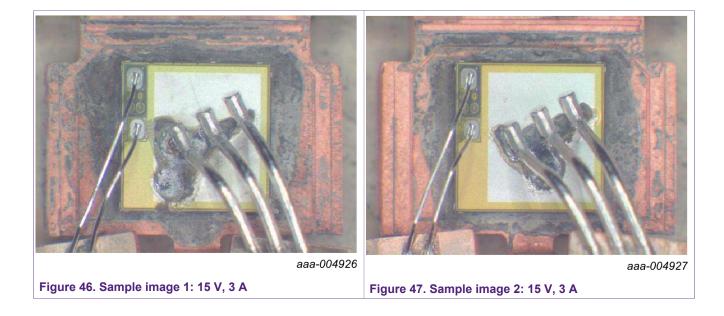
Figure 43. Device 1

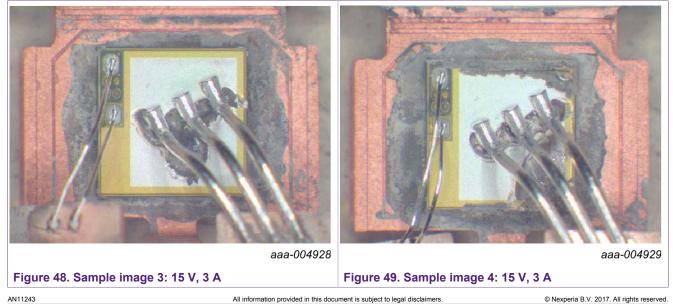
Figure 44. Device 2

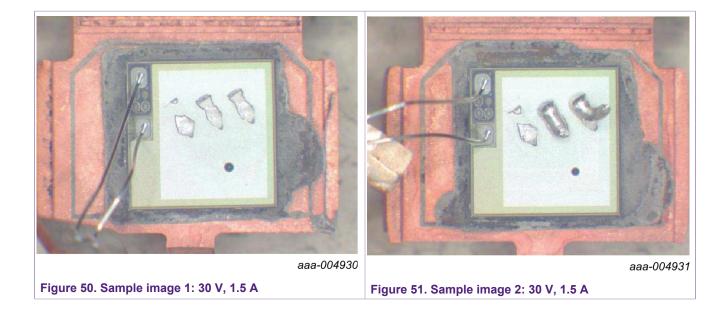


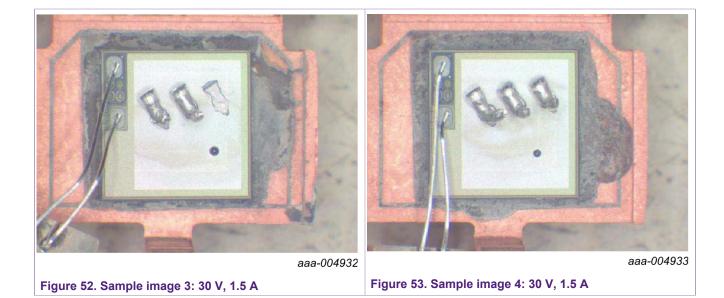
2.11 Linear mode EOS of BUK7L06-34ARC

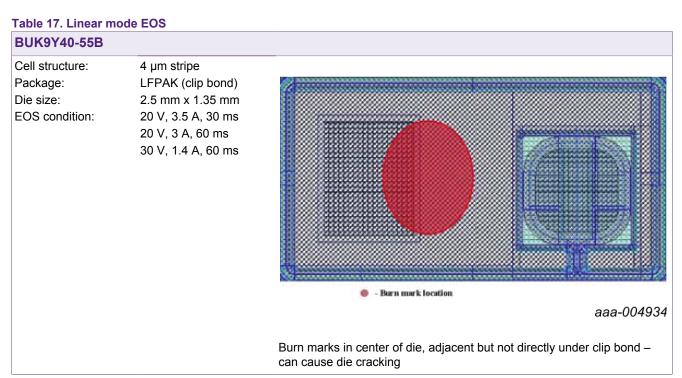
Table 16. Linear mode EOS				
BUK7L06-34AR				
Cell structure:	9 mm hexagon			
Package:	TO-220 (clip bond)			
Die size:	4.3 mm x 4.3 mm			
EOS condition:	15 V, 3 A Burn marks located in middle of the die adjacent to wire bonds			
	30 V, 1.5 A Burn mark and location are more discrete at 20 V, 1.5 A			



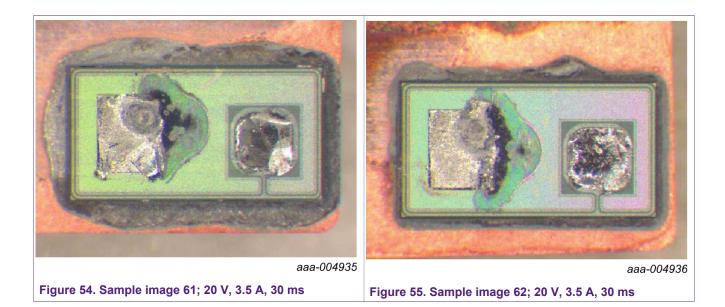




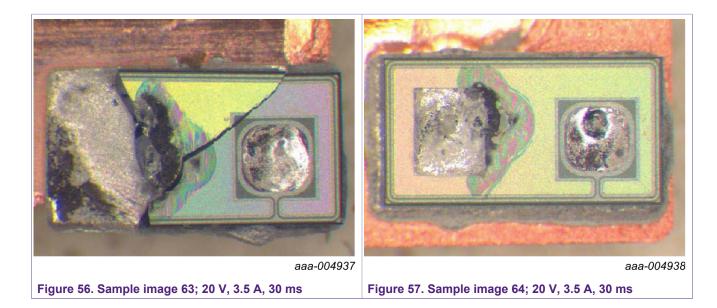








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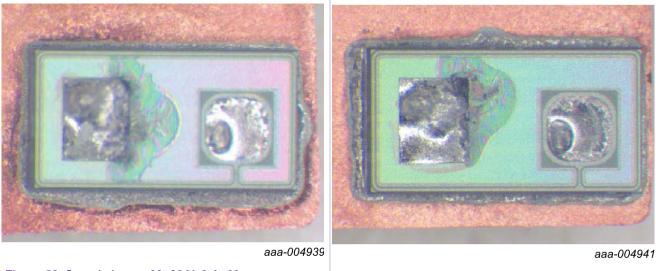
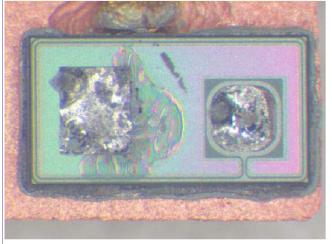


Figure 58. Sample image 66; 20 V, 3 A, 60 ms

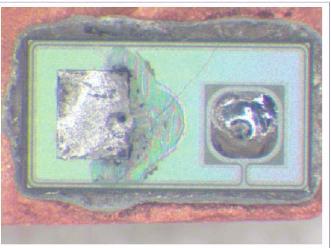
Figure 59. Sample image 67; 20 V, 3 A, 60 ms

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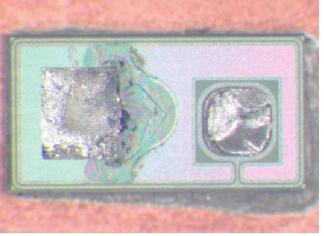
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Figure 60. Sample image 68; 20 V, 3 A, 60 ms



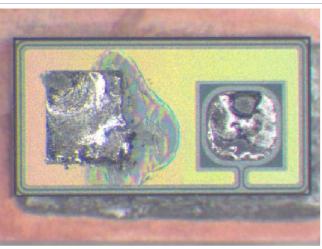
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Figure 61. Sample image 69; 20 V, 3 A, 60 ms

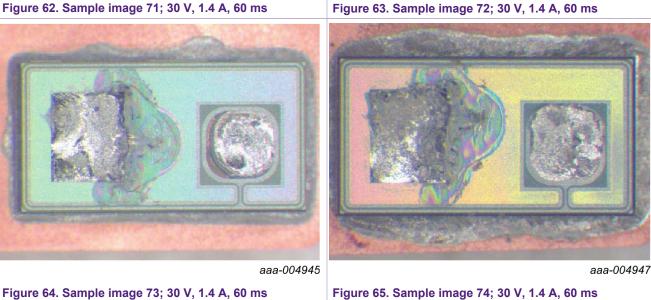


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Figure 62. Sample image 71; 30 V, 1.4 A, 60 ms



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2.13 Linear mode EOS of PSMN7R0-30YL

Table 18. Linear m PSMN7R0-30YL		
Cell structure: Package:	2 µm stripe LFPAK (clip bond)	Burn marks in center of die, adjacent but not directly under clip bond
Die size:	2.3 mm x 1.35 mm	
EOS condition:	0.1 mH, 48 A to 51 A	
	3.5 mH, 16 A to 18 A	

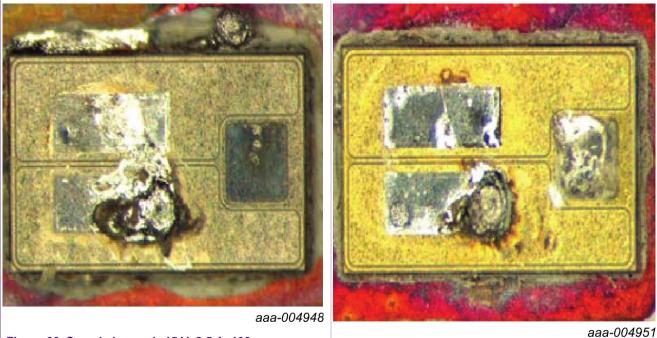


Figure 66. Sample image 1; 15 V, 2.5 A, 100 ms

Figure 67. Sample image 2; 15 V, 2.5 A, 100 ms

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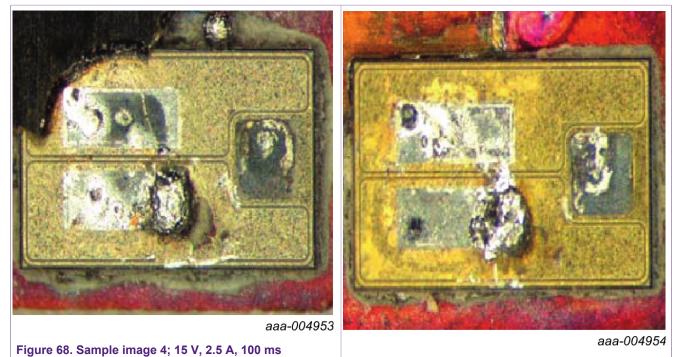


Figure 69. Sample image 5; 15 V, 2.5 A, 100 ms

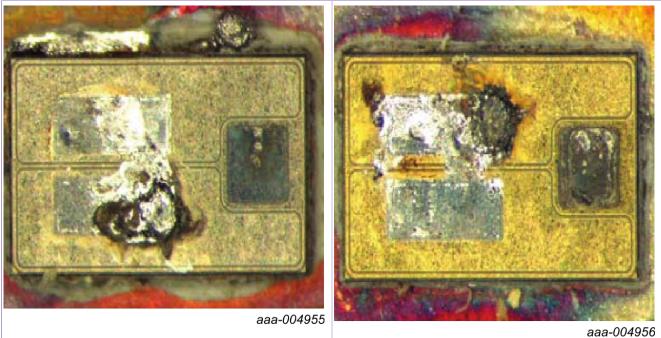


Figure 70. Sample image 11; 15 V, 5 A, 1 ms

Figure 71. Sample image 12; 15 V, 5 A, 1 ms

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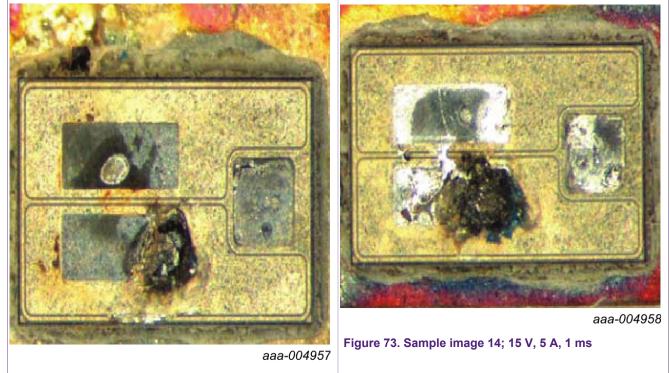


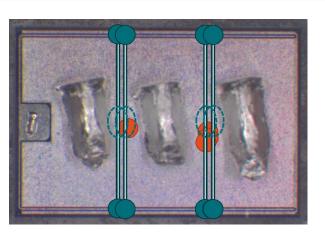
Figure 72. Sample image 13; 15 V, 5 A, 1 ms

2.14 Linear mode EOS of PSMN8R5-100PSF

Table 19. Linear mode EOS PSMN8R5-100PSF

Cell structure:	2.5 µn
Package:	SOT7
Die size:	4 mm
EOS condition:	Teal d pulse
	Orang pulse

.5 μm stripe OT78 mm x 2.67 mm eal dot – 50 V 10 ms ulse length Drange dot – 70 V, 1 ms ulse length



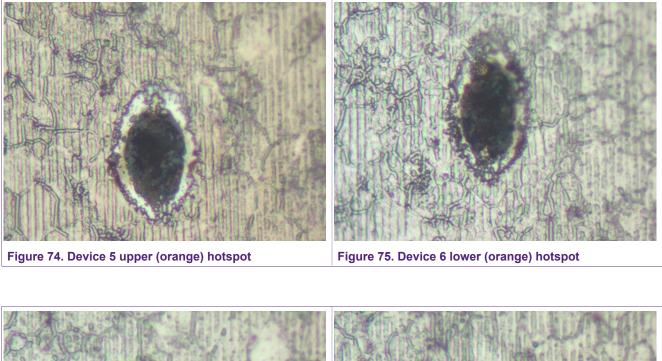
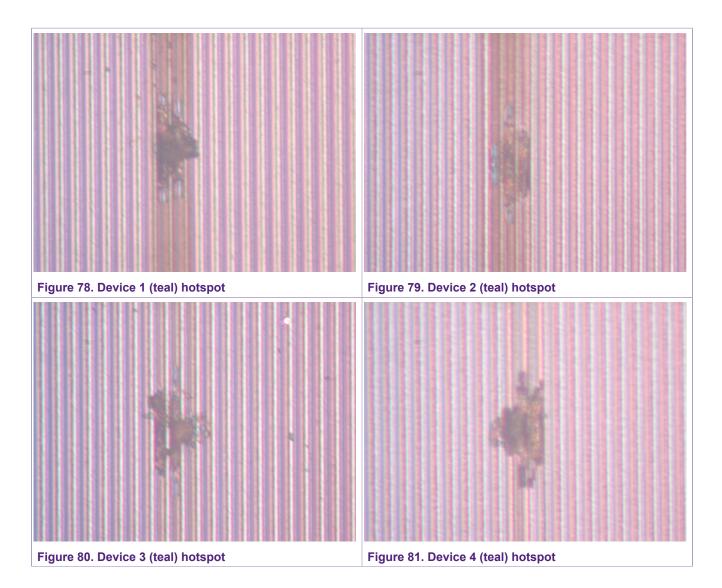




Figure 77. Device 8 lower (orange) hotspot

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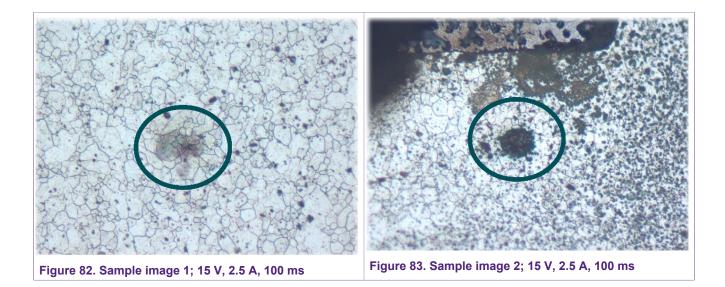


Failure signature of electrical overstress on power MOSFETs

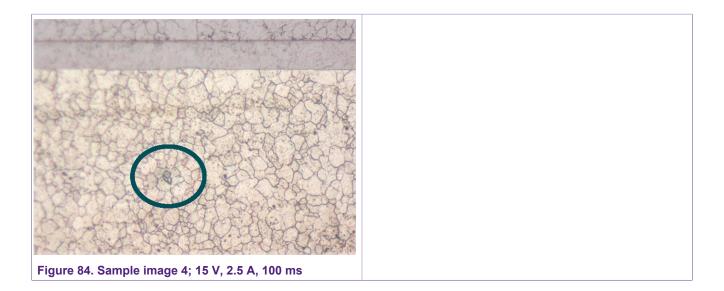
2.15 Linear mode EOS of BUK7Y3R0-40H

BUK7Y3R0-40H		
BUK7Y3R0-40H Cell structure: Package: Die size: EOS condition:	1.5 μm stripe LFPAK (clip bond) 2.3 mm x 1.35 mm 0.1 mH, 48 A to 51 A 3.5 mH, 16 A to 18 A	

Burn marks in center of die, adjacent but not directly under clip bond



AN11243 Application note



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2.16 Over-current EOS of BUK7L06-34ARC

Table 21. Over-current EOS

BUK7L06-34ARC

Cell structure: Package: Die size: EOS condition:

9 mm hexagon TO-220 (clip bond) 4.3 mm x 4.3 mm 120 A

Extensive damage starting from die where wire bonds meet die.

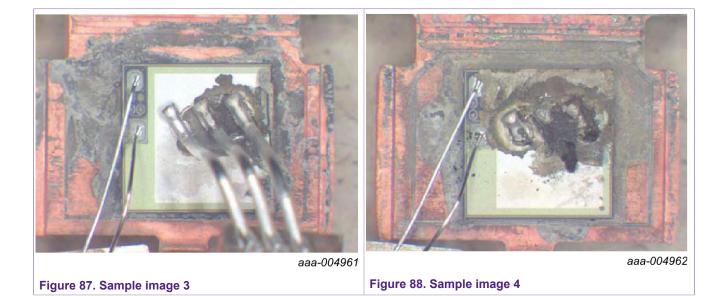
Secondary damage of reflowed solder and even fused wires are visible



aaa-004959

Figure 85. Sample image 1

Figure 86. Sample image 2



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2.17 Over-current EOS of PSMN7R0-30YL

PSMN7R0-30YL		
Cell structure:	2 µm stripe	Burn marks in center of die, adjacent but not directly under clip bond
Package:	LFPAK (clip bond)	Some evidence of die-cracking.
Die size:	2.3 mm x 1.35 mm	
EOS condition:	35 A, 35 ms	

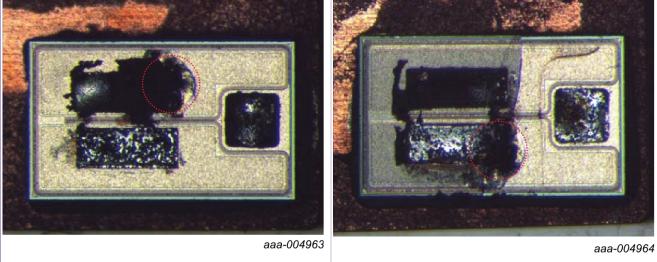
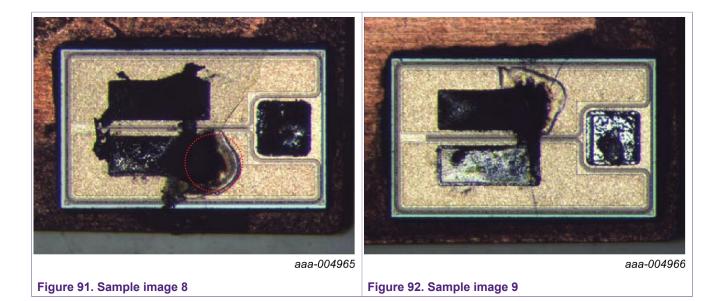




Figure 90. Sample image 7



Failure signature of electrical overstress on power MOSFETs

3 Abbreviations

Table 23. Abbreviations	
Acronym	Description
EOS	Electrical Overstress
ESD	ElectroStatic Discharge
UIS	Unclamped Inductive Switching

4 Revision history

Table 24. Revision history

Rev	Date	Description
02	20171219	superseeds Rev 01
Modifications:	Section ESD - Machine model removedAdditional EOS example added	
01	20121029	first issue

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