

UPDATE 01' SINGLE EVENT FAILURE IN POWER MOSFETS

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Abstract

This paper presents an update of the first 1994 compendium of single event test data for power MOSFETs. It provides failure thresholds from burnout or gate rupture for 01 devices of six manufacturers.

I. Introduction

Power transistor single event effects (SEE) test data obtained by Jet Propulsion Laboratory, The Boeing Company, Honeywell Space Systems Group (Clearwater, FL), The Aerospace Corporation, the group at the University of Arizona, NWSC (Crane, IN) and others have been included in this paper. Thus, this paper is a supplement to an original compendium presented in 1994 (Ref. 1.) The intent is to present a comprehensive set of MOSFET data from May, 1994, to May, 1996. It is believed, however, that additional data may be available that has not been published or brought to our attention. Contributors who desire inclusion in this and any future compendia should contact Don Nichols.

This data set includes failure threshold voltages (V_{DS} = drain-source voltage) for both single event burnout (SEB) and single event gate rupture or damage (SEGR or SEGD) of MOSFET power devices. There is no hard line of separation between power devices and lower power devices, nor is there a demonstrated immunity of the latter to SEB. There is some data (not shown) for SEB of npn bipolar devices but none for pnp bipolar devices. The bipolar data is still very limited and not included in this compendium.

The purpose of the present work is to supplement the data of Ref. 1 in order to:

- (1) provide design engineers with operating voltage limits (max V_{DS} for a specified V_{GS}) of tested devices.
- (2) identify unspecified process variables relevant to SEE response
- (3) identify those parameters characterizing SEE response

(4) present trends that permit extrapolation from the existing data set.

II. Testing Approaches

Several possible testing approaches have been considered, but two are of fundamental importance. One approach attempts to measure the SEB/SEGR cross section vs V_{DS} of a device for a given test ion (or equivalently a given LET) for a fixed gate source voltage (V_{GS}) and temperature. This type of cross section should not be confused with the LET-dependent cross sections tabulated for soft errors in ICs. The transistor cross section equals zero at lower V_{DS} and rises very rapidly only at its threshold V_{DS} (almost like a step function); then tends to level off at somewhat higher V_{DS} . So far, few experiments have extended the data far beyond threshold, but such data is mentioned when known.

To obtain SEE rates for a specified environment and operating condition (defined by temperature and V_{GS}), one must perform the same experiment for several other ions to establish the voltage threshold and cross sections above each of the voltage failure thresholds. This approach requires a large sample size and still does not provide an adequate basis for calculating the device upset rate. All of the preceding cross sections must also be repeated for angles of beam incidence greater than zero, unless a plausible angle dependence has been provided.

The second approach seeks simply to identify the threshold voltage $V_{DS}(th)$ for failure for a given ion (usually Ni⁺/Fe⁺ or Br⁺/Kr⁺), a fixed V_{GS} and temperature. The selected ion should represent a realistic worst case for the environment. Ni or Fe ions at normal angle of incidence is a realistic worst case, because there is no increased susceptibility from grazing angle ion strikes as there is for integrated circuits. The latter approach indicates a voltage operating limit to the designer who can apply a derating factor to his operation, but it also offers little chance to estimate the failure probability if one chooses to operate above threshold.

The data tabulated here in one extended table

presents threshold V_{DS} for several groups of ions at a few selected gate source voltages V_{GS} , following the second (recommended) approach. Some theoretical determinations indicate the effect of varying V_{GS} (related to oxide field) for a fixed drain-source voltage. A nearly standard technique for measuring the threshold V_{DS} consists of the following steps:

(1) Prior to any irradiation, measure the drain source current at rated BV for $V_{GS}=0$, or alternatively measure the actual breakdown V_{DS} for the same conditions. One should also measure the gate-source current at maximum rated gate voltage (usually 20 v) for $V_{DS}=0$. These measurements establish the normal operating currents.

(2) Choose a single gate voltage V_{GS} (start with the least susceptible zero voltage) and hold it constant for each subsequent irradiation step, for successively larger V_{DS} . At the end of each irradiation step 01, say, 105 ions/cm^2 , change the bias conditions back to those used in step (1) to again determine the two currents I_{GSS} and I_{DSS} .

(3) Failure may occur as either (1) SEGR as evidenced by a large permanent increase in gate current ranging between a fraction of a milliamp up to the circuit-imposed limit (say, 10 amps) or (2) SEB (burnout) evidenced by a short across source and drain as well as a gate short.

(4) Delayed Failures-- On occasions JPL and other test organizations have seen delayed types of SEGR. On some occasions, the gate currents increased to $\sim 1 \text{ mA}$ during irradiation and then increased again to the circuit limit during post-beam tests where, as always, V_{GS} was reset to 20V. Another type of SEGR failure occurs when the drain-source voltage is incremented for the next test. Some experimenters have modified the abrupt change to max gate-source voltages between irradiations, by ratcheting V_{GS} upward in steps.

III. Supporting Studies

Several collateral tests have been performed by now. Nichols et al (2), Fischer (3), Tastet (4), Mouret (5) and Titus (6) have demonstrated that higher grazing angles of ion incidence have less effect on SEB and SEGR than normally incident irradiation. Hence the complications involved in calculating SEB rates by dealing with an effective LET vs incident ion angle are simplified. (In actuality, there is no known formal method for calculating rates under these conditions for a specified environment except to take a very simplified worst case in which all strike angles are assumed to affect the device equally.) High temperature tests have been performed (2,7, 8) showing that SEB is greatly reduced at higher temperatures due to phonon interference with the avalanche burnout mechanism. In contrast, high temperatures tend to promote SEGR in a few cases, but not in others (6).

It is noted that most transistors that differ only by die size (e.g. by having a different number of the same size transistor elements or cells) have similar breakdown voltages as expected. However, there are a few occasions when such devices yield widely different SEB results. It is postulated that the dielectric oxide breakdown voltage (an uncontrolled parameter) may be responsible for wafer-to-wafer and device-to-device variability to SEB.

IV. Organization and Scope of Data

This paper presents SEB and SEGR data for MOSFETS in Table I for all known new data taken up to May, 1996-- as marked with an asterisk in column 1. Data are also included from carrier tests for those parts that are closely related to parts for which new data are tabulated, so as to put the new data in context. Closely related device data are those lying on a contiguous row in the table's data entries. It is noted that many tests are repeated in the data sets-- useful for showing consistency in most cases, but possibly cost ineffective. Some data are taken at an elevated temperature, which consistently shows a higher threshold voltage when SEB is the failure mode. Data sets by HSS are particularly useful in comparing the two temperatures with a switched gate bias. Dynamic testing, has a dramatic effect in forestalling burnout failures, by interrupting the rather slow failure modes.

Six manufacturers are represented in this second set, which broadens the manufacturer base beyond that reported in Ref. 1-- primarily for International Rectifier (INR) and Harris (HAR). Most data are for commercial parts, but there are some new "rad-hard" technologies.

The data are grouped in rows by device manufacturer. Within each manufacturing group, devices with the lowest breakdown voltage are listed first-- first n-channel and then p-channel. Devices that are very similar, or the same devices tested with different conditions (e.g. V_{GS}) are grouped in touching, adjacent rows. The columns list manufacturer, device number(s), channel type, and test sample size. It is observed that samples are seldom large enough to provide rigorous statistics, nor a characterization of maverick behavior that is occasionally noted. Most data, however, are fairly repeatable. Subsequent columns list the rated breakdown voltage (BV) and gate-source voltage V_{GS} .

The next five columns group the data according to test ions. Single voltage entries in the ion columns show a failure voltage; a slashed pair show a pass/fail voltage threshold. The first column is for low-LET ions having LETs less than that of the dominant Ni/Ir/Co/Cu group included in column two. This first group is useful in judging the adequacy or postulated theories (See for example, ref. 3). It is now often accepted that a characterization with a single ion of the second group may be all that is needed for project requirements. This view is supported by two facts: (1) those heavier ions having a higher LET have fluxes in outer space two or three orders of magnitude smaller than that of the Ni/Ir/Co group, and (2) there is no need to account for enhanced effects from grazing-angle collisions having a high "effective" (angle-dependent) LET. The third group in the table includes Br and Kr ($LET \approx 37 \text{ MeV/mg/cm}^2$), traditional high LET ions at the Brookhaven Van De Graaff (BNL) and U.C. Berkeley 88-inch cyclotron (88), respectively. The fourth group includes the highest LET ions easily available at the aforementioned facilities. The fifth column includes data from very high energy (10-100 MeV/amu) facilities: the Berkeley Bevalac (now defunct) and GANIL (France). It is this last group of ions that present some inconsistencies with the lower energy LET characterizations, for reasons that have not yet been fully explained. Some of this column set are empty for this update;

they are nevertheless retained to be compatible with the larger dataset of [Cf. 1

The remaining set of columns provide the failure mode, the test group, test date, ion facility and "Remarks." It is useful to know that INR uses 7000 and 8000 numbers to specify n-channel devices with 1 00 Krad and 1 Mrad total dose tolerance, respectively; both INR and Harris use 9000 numbers for p-channel devices. The second INR mfr number (or the *first* for three-digit part designations) relates to the breakdown voltage. The next number is related to the die size-- the larger this number, the larger the die size and (usually) the larger the number of individual cells. INR's letter "H" in the third place from the left of the letter prefix means that the devices are especially designed to be radiation resistant to total dose. It turns out that such devices are also very resistant to single event effects as well. The fourth letter of INR (which may be "H") and the third letter of HARRIS devices is a package designation not expected to affect SEB/SEGR data. Harris denotes rad hard tolerance with a suffix after the device number; R= 1 00 Krad and H= 1 Mrad. FSE is a recent Harris designation for their SEB hard technology -- a claim defined by the data given in Table 1.

VI. Conclusion

This updated compendium of SEB effects (SEB and SEGR) in power MOSFETs can be combined with the data presented in Ref. 1 to provide a useful data base for designers of satellite and space systems. Some extrapolations may be warranted, and some cautionary observations are also provided. Testing with only one ion is often acceptable for system requirements; the reduced effect of incident ions at oblique angles presents an important simplification for parts selection if parts are available that meet the measured threshold voltage failure levels for the highest-LET population of any consequence in space-- the Ni¹¹ group.

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Table 1. The Failure (or Pass/Fail) Vds Voltages for MOSFETs for Indicated Ion Beams

NOTE: The * appearing in Column 1 indicates new or revised data. Contiguous row entries are repeated data shown here to put new data in context. This table is not an accumulation of all prior test data reported in 1994.

Vtr	Vtr Number	Generic No	Channel	Sample	BVds Vgs(off)	Low Z Ions	Fe,Ni,Co, LET=27	Br or Kr, LET=High Z Ions	High Energy Ions	Failure	Test Org	Date	Location	Remarks
*VOT	IRF440	n		3	500, 30V			240(196 MeV Br)		SEGP	UA	*1994	PN	Mouret, IEEE94, Room T, Angle data exist
*Pul	EOG2292	n		*	100, 0			60(LET=44)		SEGR/SEB	J	*11/95	TAV	Nicho's, 196 MeV Xe
*xys	IXPV40N25RH	n		6	250, 0	200(Ne), 140(Ar)		55(Kr)		SEB	J	*3 & 6/90	88	Nicho's, Higher threshold at 100 deg. C.
*xys	IXTM35N30	n		4	300, 0	225(Ne), 160(Ar)		67(Kr)		SEB	J	*6/90	88	Nicho's, Higher threshold at 100 deg. C.
*xys	IXTM21N45	n		5	450, 0	315(Ne), 214(Ar)		144(Kr)		SEB	J	*3 & 6/90	88	Nicho's, Higher threshold at 100 deg. C.
*xys	IXPV21N45RH	n		3	450, 0	300(Ne), 270(Ar)		140(Kr)		SEB	J	*3 & 6/90	88	Nicho's, Higher threshold at 100 deg. C.
*SL	VN98AF	n		*	90, 0V			60/70(LET=44)		SEB	J	*11/95	TAV	Nicho's, 196 MeV Xe
*SL	VN98AF	n		*	90, 10V			60/65(LET=44)		SEB	J	*11/95	TAV	Nicho's, 196 MeV Xe
SL	IRFF130	2N6796	n	2	100, 10V	100(Ni), 100(Ne), 70(Ar)	50(Cu)			SEB	P/A	*1990	88*	Compare to NR device (1994 compendium)
*SL	IRFF130	2N6796	n		100, 5V		50(Co)			SEB	B	*7/95	88*	Oberg, Ambient & 100 deg. C.
SL	9230 family	2N695	p		200, 5		Hard(Co)			N/A	B	7/95*	88	Oberg, -100 deg. C, looking for SEGR
*SL	420 family	2N6794	n		500, 5		300(Co)			SEB	B	*3/95	88	Oberg, Ambient & 100 deg. C.
*SL	430 family	2N6902	n	10(ot)	500, 5		317(Co)			SEB	B	*7/95	88	Oberg, Ambient & -100 deg. C.
SL	430 family (continued)	2N6902	n		500, 5		300			SEB	B	*4/93	88	Ambient=45 deg. C.
					12		300			SEB/SEGP	B	*10/93	LW	Temp=100 deg. C.
*SL	VP0610 -low power	p		7	60, 25V		Hard(Ni)			N/A	HSS	*4/95	BNL	Lintz, Room T.
*SL	VP0610 -low power	p		7	60, 25V		Hard(Ni)			N/A	HSS	*4/95	BNL	Lintz, 120 deg. C.
*NP	IR4V7054	n		4	60, 12V		55(Br)	<95(1)		SEGP	C	*4/95	BNL	*Plus, Rept #SEGR-003, 25 deg. C. only
	continued				20V		46(Br)			SEGP	C	*4/95	BNL	*Plus, Rept #SEGR-003, 25 deg. C. only
NP	IR4V7054	n			60, 0V		Hard(Ni)			N/A	P	*7/93	BNL	DC9242, Bob Ferndon, 7/13/93
	continued				5V		Hard(Ni)			N/A	P	*7/93	BNL	DC9242, Bob Ferndon, 7/13/93
*NP	IRF140	2N7219	n		100, 0 & 5		95/90(Ni)			SEB	BNL	*6/93	BNL	9210, Lintz, Same response at Room T & 90 deg. C.
NP	IRF140	n			100, 0		Hard(Ni)	70/80(Br)		SEB	ESA	*1/94	BNL	9203E, Harwell, Rept AEA-PS-1348
*NP	IRF150	2N6764	n		100, 0, 1 & 5		95/90(Ni)			SEB	HSS	*6/93	BNL	9232, Lintz, Same response at Room T & 90 deg. C.
NP	IRF150	2N6764	n		100, 0		90/100(Ni)	70/90(Br)		SEB	ESA	*1/94	BNL	9229G, Harwell, Rept AEA-PS-1348
NP	IRF150	2N6764	n	3	100, 10	100(Ne), 70(Ar)	50(Cu)		40/60(12 GeV La-Rev.)	SEB P/A & J	*990	88	JPL, Bevalac ion LET=30, 6/89.	
NP	IRF150	2N6764	n		100, 0	105	75	75		SEB	A	*5/92	88	Koga
NP	IRF150	2N6764	n	3 each	100, 0 off	100(208 MeV C)	70(Ni)	65(Br)	55(1)	50(1 to 4 GeV Xe) GAN'L	SEB ONES	*1/90	BNL	3 GAN'L ions, Taster, PADECS9*
NP	IRF150	2N6764	n		100, 0	>80(Fe)	>80(Fe)			90/100(>1 GeV Fe) SEB	J	6/98	BNL	11 wo Fe ions at Bevalac, each LET<6.
NP	IR4150	n			100, 0	100(208 MeV C)	100(Fe)	100(Cu)	100(Kr)	60/100(12 GeV La) SEB	J & P	1990	88	11=JPL at Bevalac, June 1988
	continued				100, 10		100(Cu)	90/100(Kr)		?	P	*990	88	Waskiewicz & Groninger, DNA Rept., 2/90
*NP	IR4E7110	n		4	100, 12V		95(Br)	41(1)		SEGP	C	*4/95	BNL	*Plus, Rept #SEGR-003, 25 deg. C. only.
	continued				20V		63(Br)	29(1)		SEGP	C	*4/95	BNL	*Plus, Rept #SEGR-003, 25 deg. C. only.
NP	IR4E7110	n			100, 2V		Hard(Ni)	Hard(Br)		N/A	P	*7/92	BNL	90 deg. C.
	continued				15V		Hard(Ni)	70(Br)		SEGP	P	*7/92	BNL	90 deg. C.
*NP	IRF250	2N6766	n		200, 0, 1 & 5		135/140(Ni)			SEB	HSS	*6/93	BNL	9238, Lintz, Same response at Room T & 90 deg. C.
NP	IRF250	2N6766	n		200, 0		120/140(Ni)	<120(Br)		SEB	ESA	*1/94	BNL	9229G, Harwell, Rept AEA-PS-1348
NP	IRF250	2N6766	n		200, 0		*135			SEB	A	*9/89	88	Koga
NP	IRF250	2N6766	n		200, 0		140(Fe), 120(Cu)	100(Kr)		SEB	A & B	1989	88/8ev	Oberg & Kolasinski, Bev=Bevalac, now defunct.
	continued			2	10	200(Ne), 120(Ar)	90(Cu), 100(Ni)	85(Br)		SEB	P/A	*1990-1992	88/BNL	Waskiewicz
	continued			3 each	0 off	200(C)	135(Ni)	112(Br)	107(1)	100(Xe)-GAN'L	ONES	*1/90	BNL	3 GAN'L ions, Taster, PADECS9*
NP	IRF250	n		5	200, 0 off	200(C)		165 (212 MeV Br)		SEB	ONES	*9/93		2 GAN'L ions also, Taster, PADECS93 p 452.
NP	IRF250	2N7225	n		200, 5		150			SEB	B	*1/93	88	Temp=25 deg. C.
	continued				5		160			SEB	B	*1/93	88	Temp=100 deg. C.
NP	IRF250	2N7225	n	2	200, 5		130(Kr)			SEB	NASDA	2&3/95	JAERI?	Shinosaki, 80 deg. C, LDC9120, NEED ROOM TEMP

