Analyse de fiabilité de MEMS RF
Méthodologie et résultats

Jérémie Dhennin

Salon Microwave & RF
Conférence Fiabilité des Composants et Systèmes Electroniques Hyperfréquences

01/04/15

ID : ELEMCA

Analyses & expertise Laboratory

Key figures

2003 : Creation of NOVA MEMS
Turnover 2013 : 750k€ (Customers + CNES + R&D)

2015 : Rebranding → ELEMCA
Private capital (X. Lafontan)

Team

13 collaborators – 11 technical :

- ✓ 3 PhD
- ✓ 5 engineers
- ✓ 3 technicians

Main partners

CNES
Industrial partner

LAAS-CNRS
Research partner

Infrastructures

CNES : Technical operations
950m² of laboratory

TIC Valley : Administrative / Sales

Markets & references

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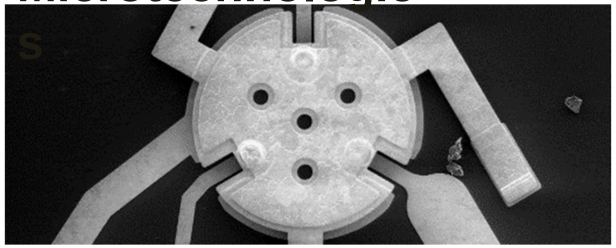
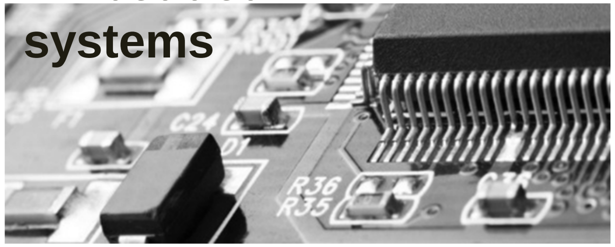
TESTS ANALYSES EXPERTISE

Microtechnologies



Embedded systems

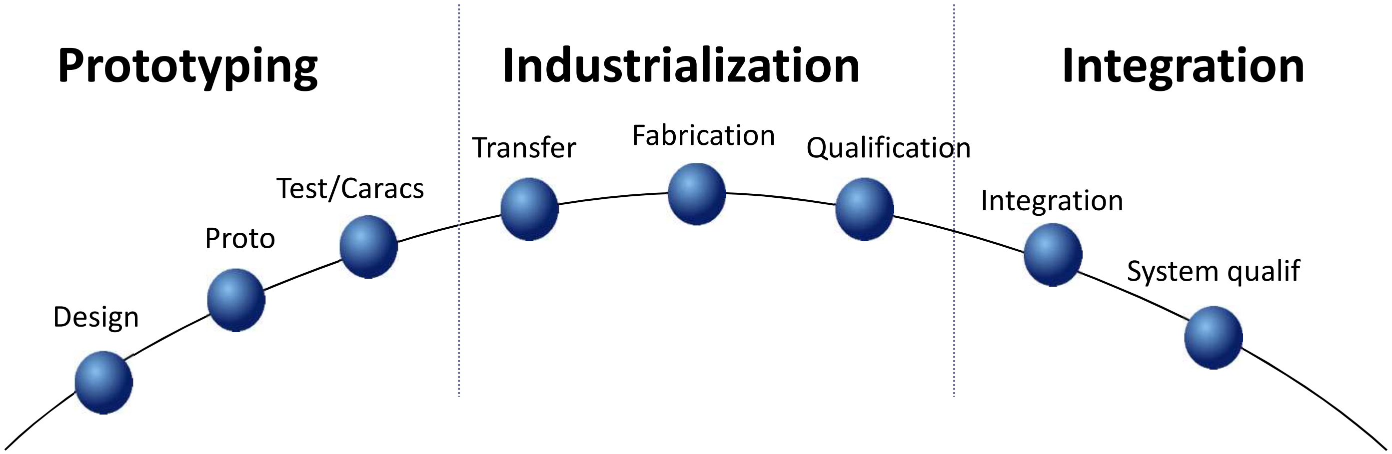


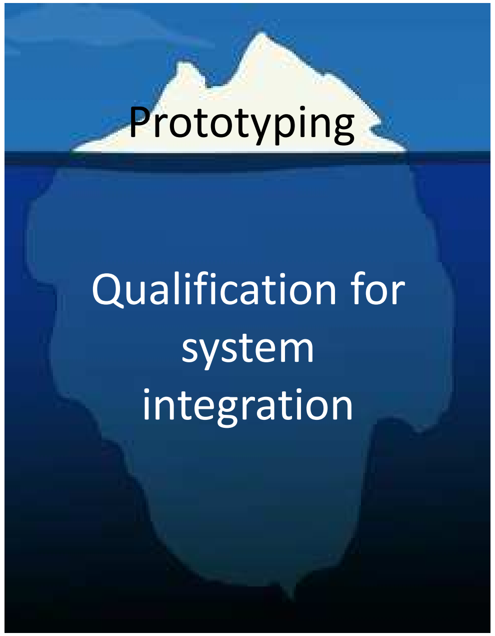
Mechanical parts

MEMS	Semiconductor	Aerospace	Ground transport
DelfMEMS	Esterline Auxitrol	AIRBUS DEFENCE & SPACE	ACTIA
lemoptix	EXXELIA GROUP	cnes De l'espace pour la Terre	ALSTOM
measurement SPECIALTIES	MEGGITT	esa	BOSCH
SAFRAN Colibrys	rakon	LIEBHERR	Continental
tronics microsystems	SOFRADIR	NEXEYA	RENAULT
ULIS	ST life.augmented	SAFRAN Technofan	Valeo
		ThalesAlenia Space	
		ZODIAC AEROSPACE	

Energy	Health Care	Security	Public research
AREVA	essilor	COBHAM	csem
cea	Pierre Fabre	gemalto security to be free	ESIEE ENGINEERING
TOTAL	SORIN GROUP	MBDA MISSILE SYSTEMS	LAAS-CNRS
		SAFRAN Sagem	ONERA
		THALES Thales Communications & Security	

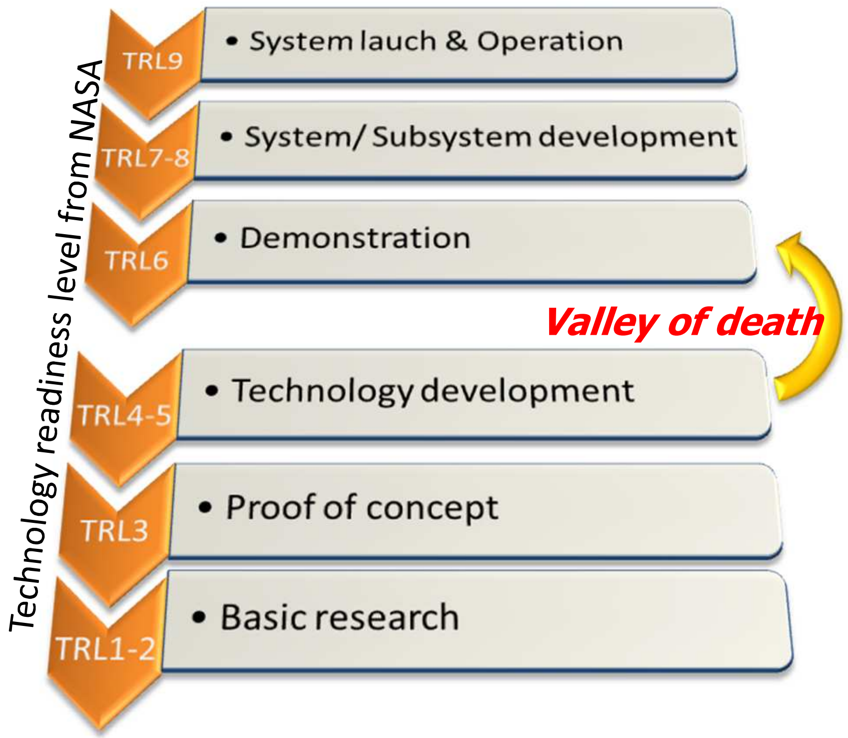
Technology development phases





- **Development cost**
  - » Sensors: 10 – 100 M€
  - » Actuators: 100 – 1 000 M€

Product development pitfalls



Valley of death: between prototyping and integration / end-use

Main causes :

- » Lack of reliability data
  - » No statistical models
  - » No ageing laws
- » High development costs
  - » Low visibility on the budget required to develop a MEMS device (active structure + packaging+ electronics + tests + qualification)
  - » Difficult to reach volume production
  - » Need to reach a threshold confidence level to enable the use of new technologies

The reliability assessment process flow

Maturity of the product	Tests performed		Output
Development: 10s to 100 pieces manufactured	HALT (Highly accelerated lifetest): stress the device far beyond its expected specifications to evaluate the margins. (thermal, mechanical, electrical stresses, and coupled)	Loop	Design verification / modification Process validation Optimization **No lifetime quantification**
When completed, go on to the next step. But mind the gap!			
Industrialization: 10 to 10000 pieces Stabilized process	HASS (Highly accelerated Stress Screen) = **reliability evaluation** of devices representative of the production Temperature, humidity, mechanical tests, radiations…	Loop	Lifetime assessment in any given environment Failure rate Fine tuning of the process / design
Mass production: up to Billion pieces	**Qualification** = check the functionality of the devices after the accelerated aging conditions **defined by the mission profile (customer input)**		Go / no Go information

Need some standards

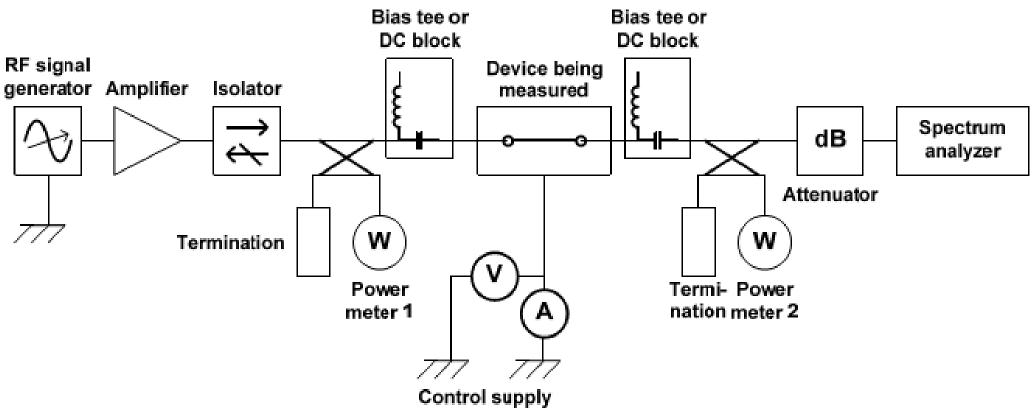
- Which standards use to evaluate the reliability and qualify the MEMS devices?
  - Evaluation testing:
    - Electrical stress (Life test, HTOL…)
    - Mechanical stress (shocks, vibrations…)
    - Environmental stress (temp. shock and cycling, seal tests…)
    - Assembly capability
    - Radiation testing
  - Other standards:
    - CEI 60068 – environmental testing, CEI 60749 – Semiconductor devices
    - MIL-883-STD
    - JESD22
- How to we account for the specificities of MEMS devices?
  - Multi-physic system
  - Specific failure mechanisms
  - Acceleration factors unknown

MEMS peculiarities

Electronic products	MEMS devices
Processes well established, yield	Processed still been tuned
Gap between the designers and the process teams	The designers must know about the process (impact on the material prop., interactions between structures)
The package aims at separating the operating part from the exterior (except electrical connections)	The package needs to allow the sensing / actuation of the mobile parts and to transmit the signals (elec, optical, chemical)
Reliability issues are well-known	Reliability issues are numerous (product dependant) and involve many physical domains
Accelerated aging (quite) easy to setup	May be difficult to run multiple tests in parallel (MOEMS): expensive custom setup

The RF-MEMS case study

- Standard for testing: ISO 62047-5
  - Definitions (actuation voltage, RF parameters, resonant frequency, etc.)
  - Methodology to measure the actuation voltage, the impedance, S Parameters



  - Reliability: « to characterize the lifetime of a RF-MEMS switch, it has to be actuated in a repetitive way until failure » (approx. translation from french…)
    - Cold switching
    - Hot switching
    - Other environmental tests (TCy, HBT, shocks, vib)
  - Typical failure mechanisms: dielectric charging, self-actuation, material transfer and dielectric formation on the ohmic contacts)

Methodology

Preliminary study

- ✓ Bibliographic survey
- ✓ Synthesis of field experience
- ✓ Technological analyses on functional devices
- ✓ *Mission profiles*

Identification of (most probable) failure mechanisms
Definition of test plan (with critical stresses to accelerate failure mechanisms)

"Custom" Reliability test plan

- ✓ Realization of stress tests (one batch = one test), with in-situ integrity monitoring

Failed devices (failures due to stress tests)

Reliability evaluation synthesis

- ✓ Failure analysis
- ✓ FMEA building
- ✓ Lifetime & failure ratio in testing environments

Failure mechanisms ranking and associated, accelerating stresses

Qualification plan definition

- ✓ Selection of safe operating area, according to device limits

"Product" dedicated qualification plan

The RF-MEMS case study

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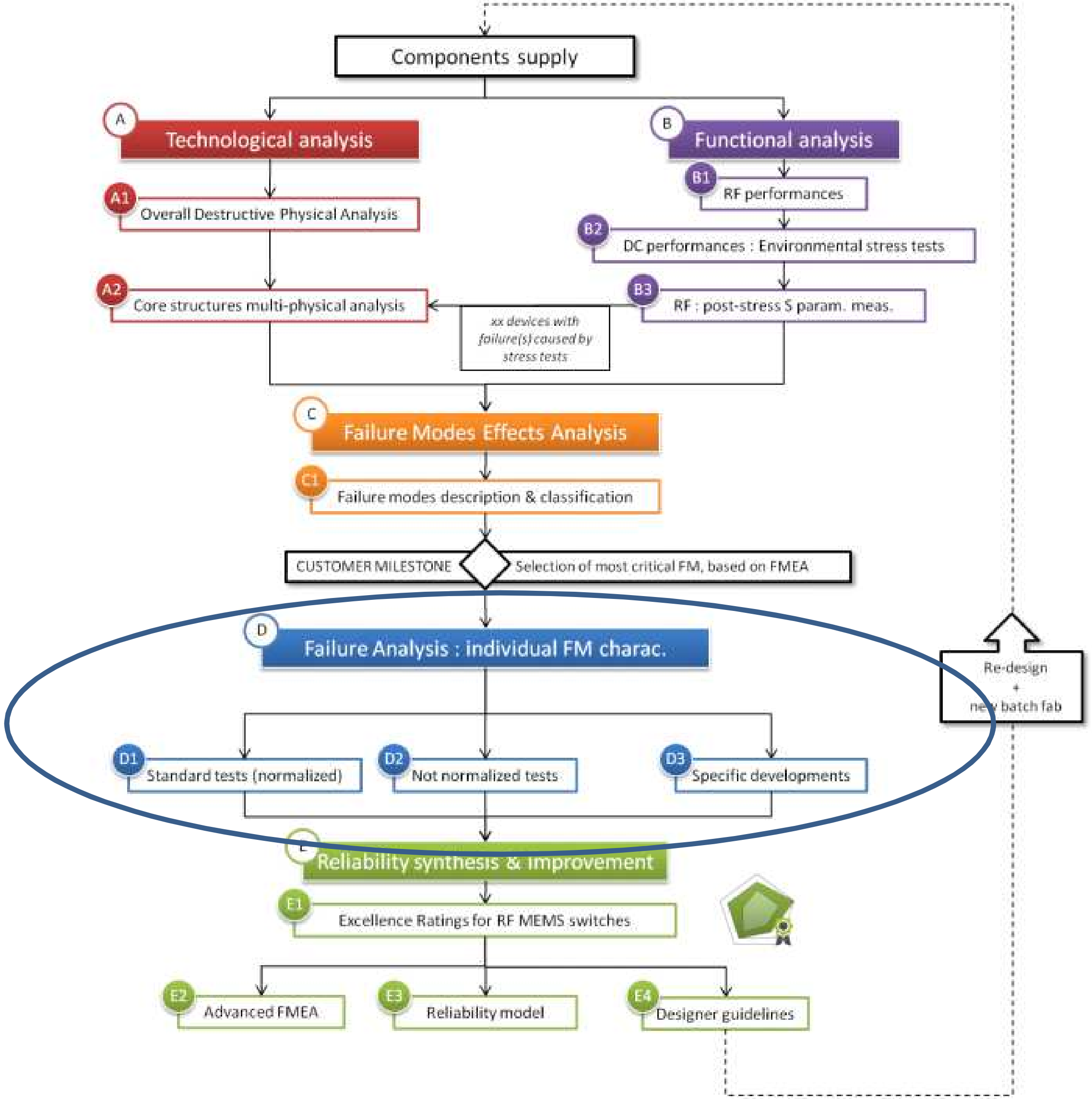
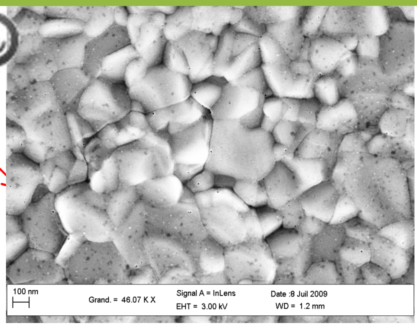


How to characterize each failure mechanism independently?

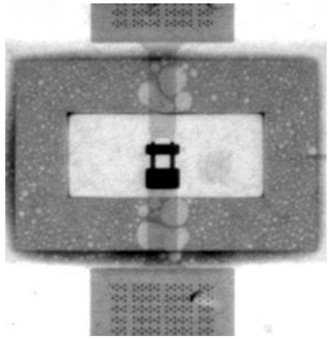
The RF-MEMS case study

Fatigue & creep of movable parts

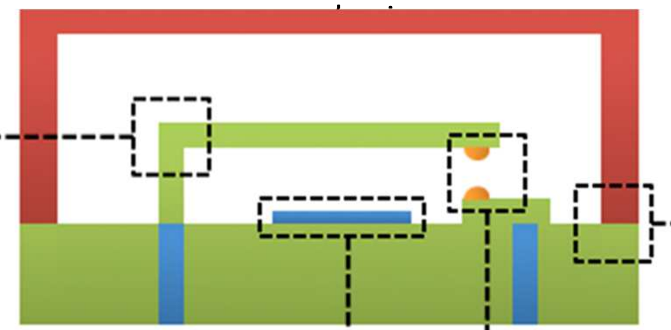


Decohesion of grain boundaries

Packaging hermeticity



MS sealing ring

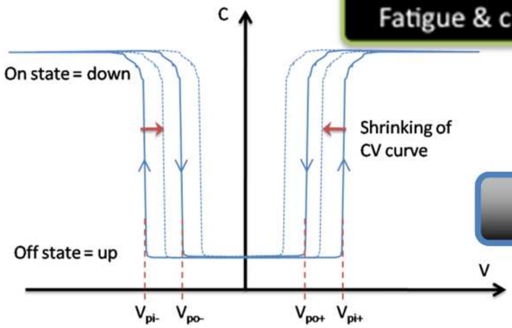


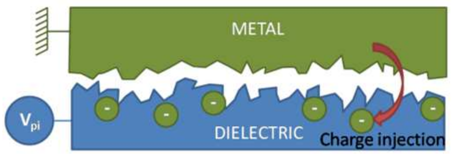
Fatigue & creep of movable parts

Charging effect

Packaging hermeticity

Contact degradation

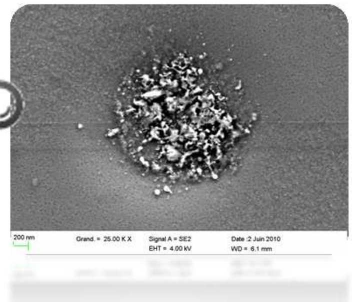


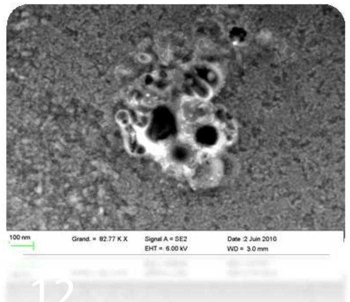


Charging effect

Contact degradation

Material transfers

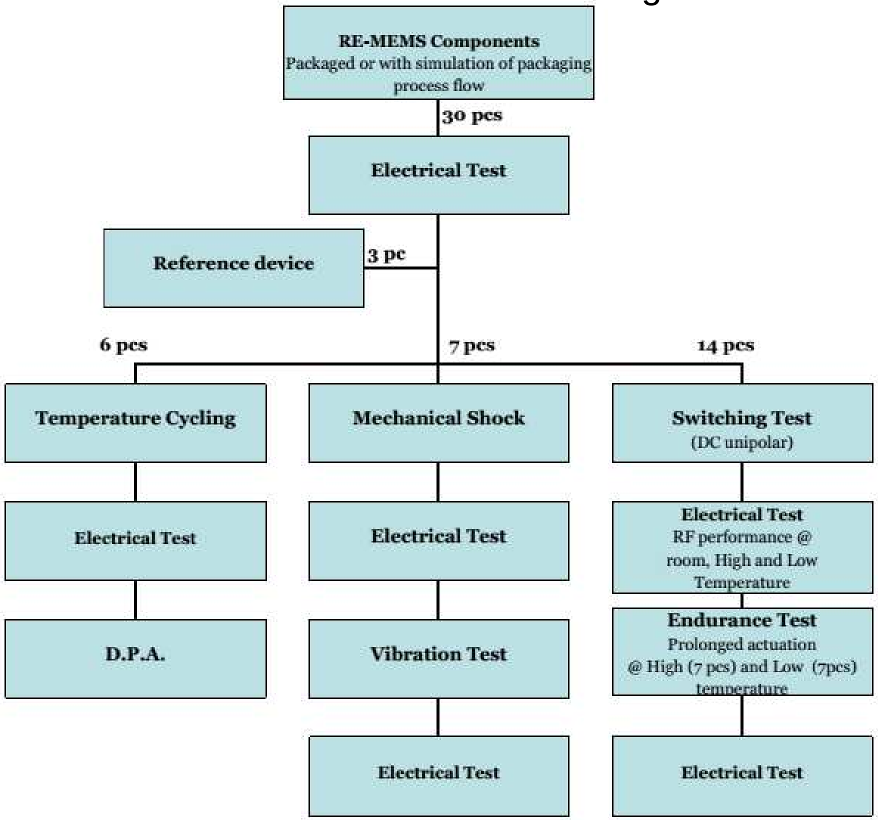




The RF MEMS case study

- Proposed test plan

ESA RF MEMS benchmarking call



Qualification tests

Failure mechanisms

Dielectric charging assessment
- KPFM
- Cycling tests under different polarization conditions

Contact degradation
- Micro bending tests
- Cycling tests / Power handling ability

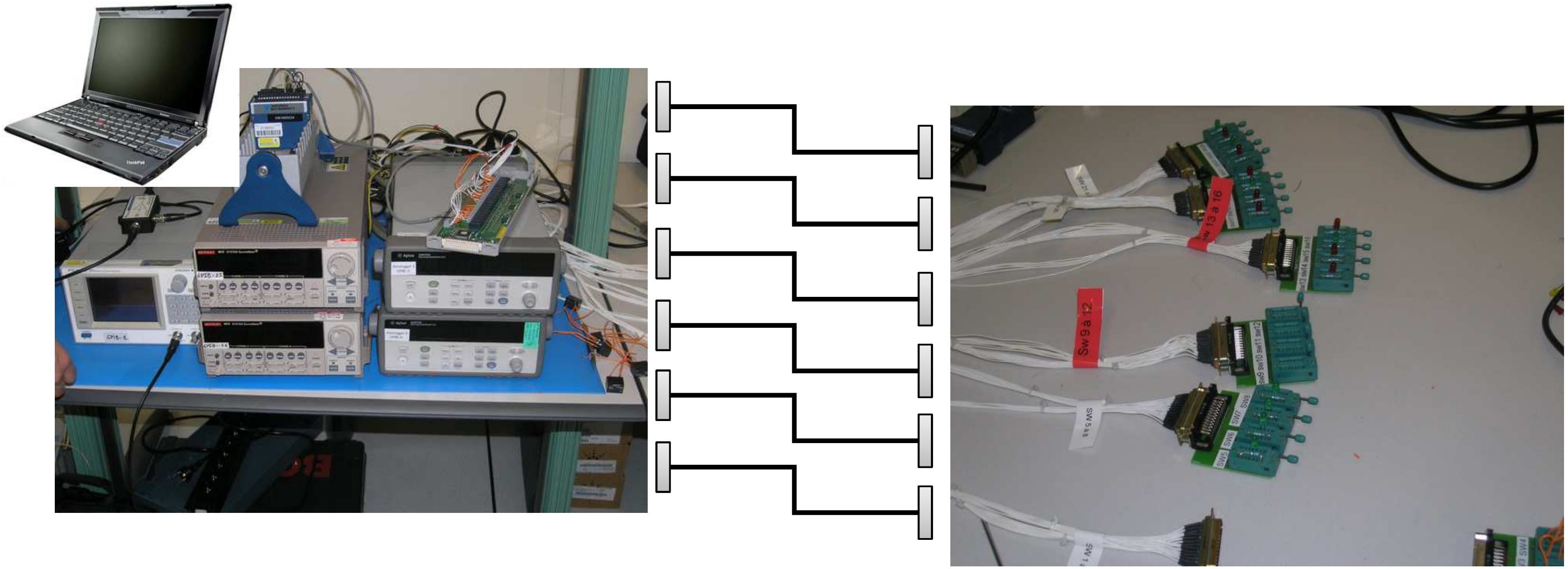
Packaging
- Sealing material inspection (SEM-EDX, EBSD)

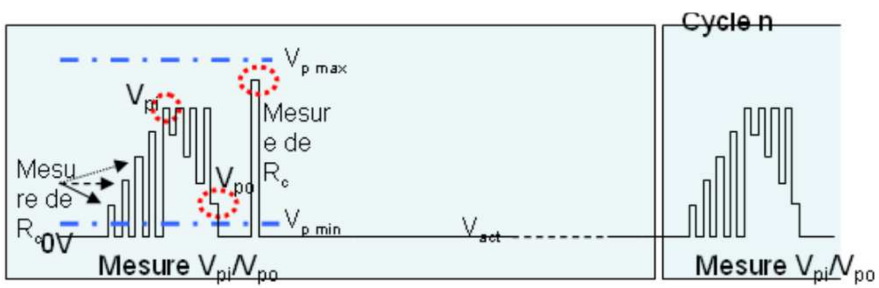
Creep / material fatigue
- Vpi / Vpo shift under permanent / cyclic actuation
- Crack propagation tests
- EBSD

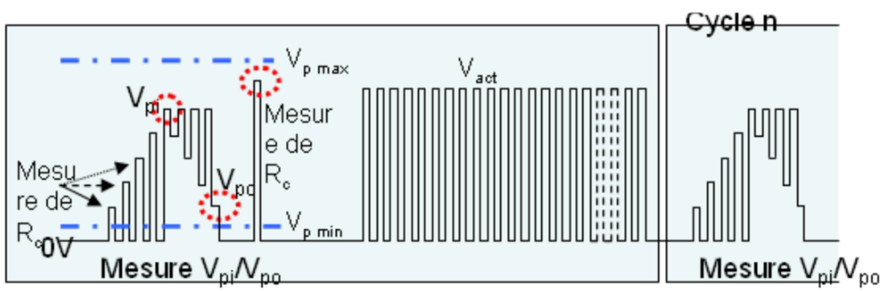
PoF / Acceleration factors

Environmental lifetest
MEMO project: CNES – TAS – LETI – XLIM

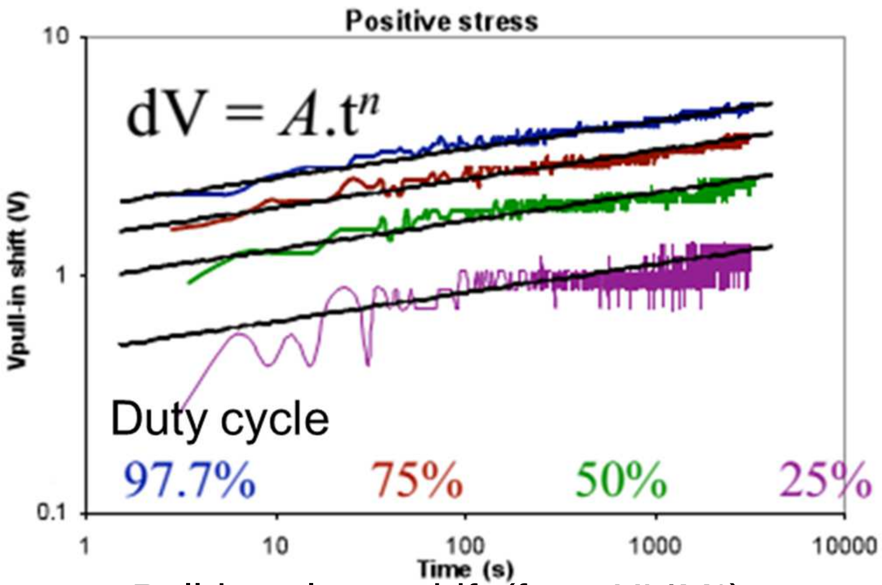
- 24 channels





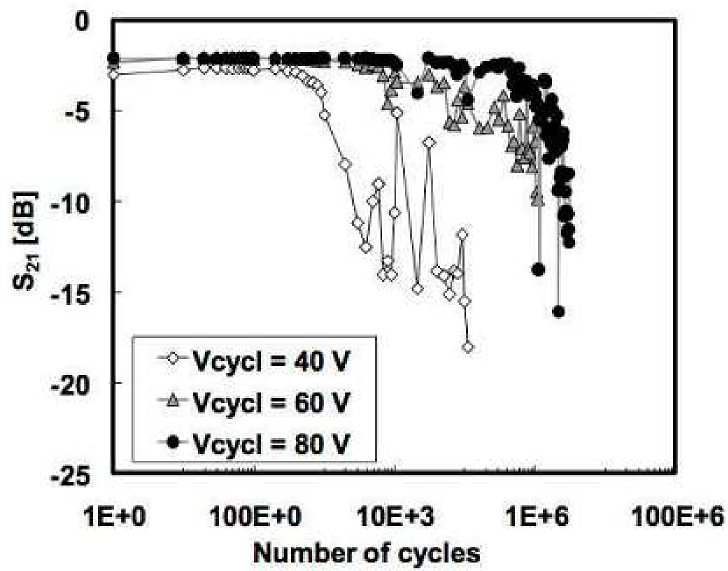


Accelerated aging: good results



Pull-in voltage shift (from XLIM*)

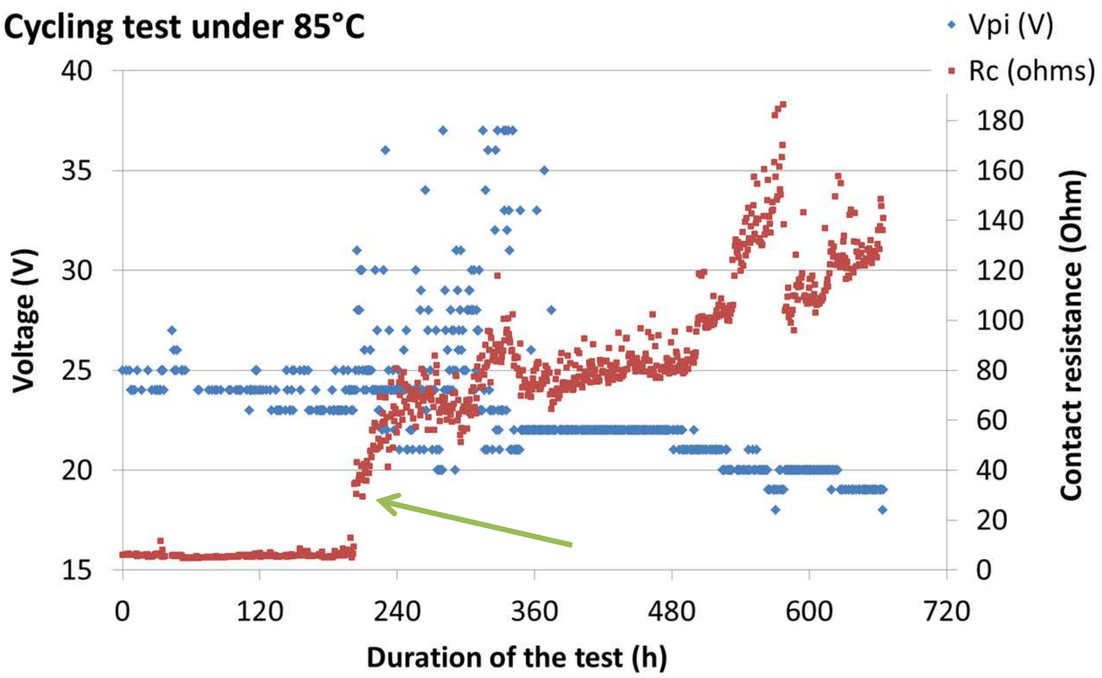
Contact resistance evolution (from UoPadova)**



* David Mardivirin, Pierre Chauveau, Arnaud Pothier, Aurelian Crunteanu, Pierre Blondy, Reliability of Dielectric Less RF-MEMS Capacitive Switches, *Proceedings of CCT MCE MEMS reliability workshop, 2008*
** Enrico Autizi, Reliability and Failure Analysis of RF-MEMS switches for space applications, PhD Thesis, University of Padova, 2011

Accelerated aging:
MEMO project: CNES – TAS – LETI – XLIM

- HTOL

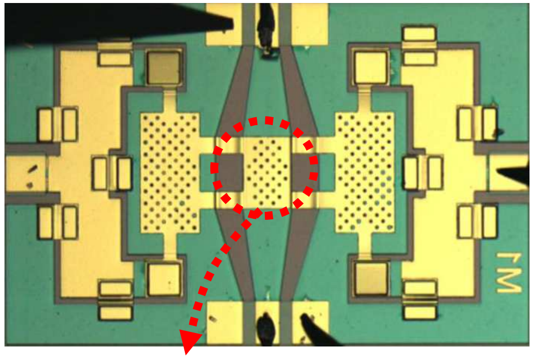


Cycling test at 1Hz

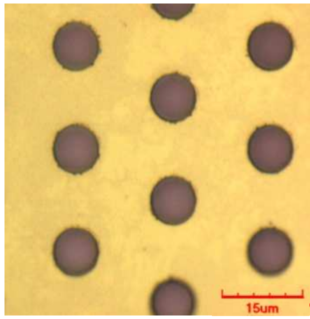
Contact resistance degradation

Mechanical relaxation?

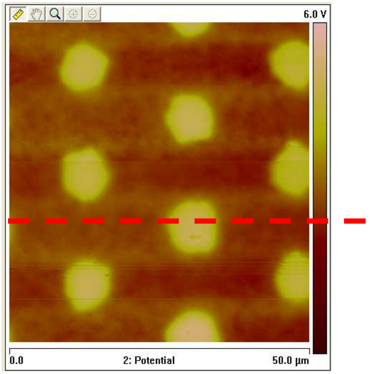
Experimental charging characterization: Kelvin Probe Force Microscopy techniques

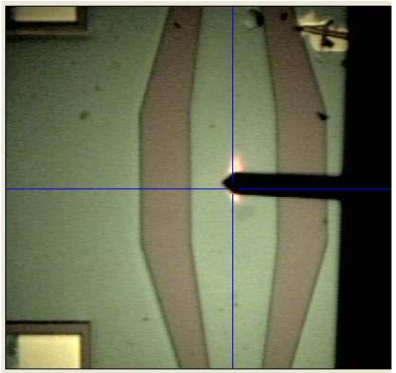


Microscope picture

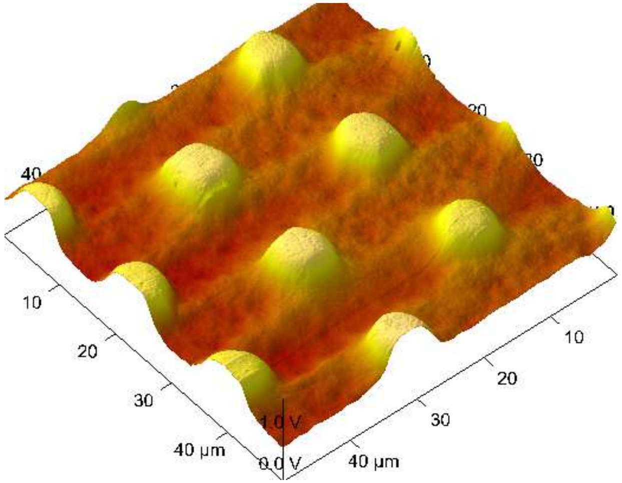


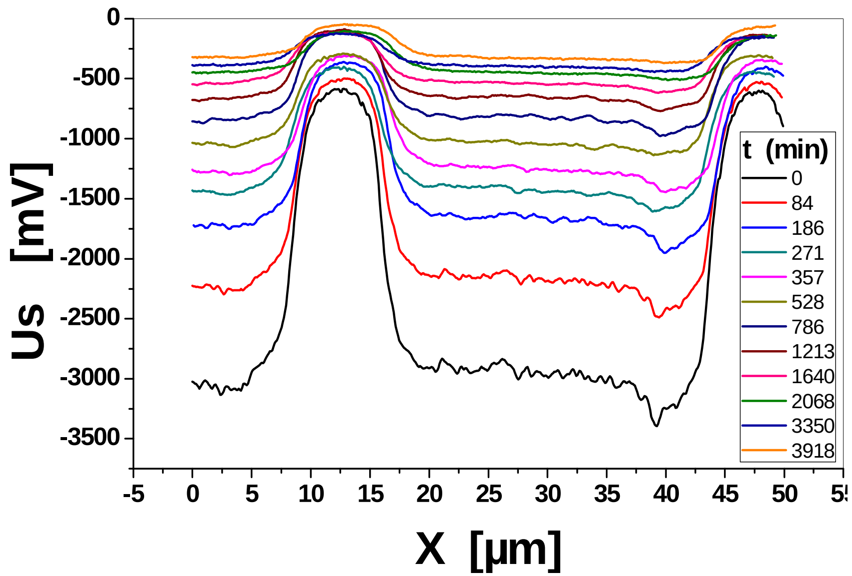
Surface potential





During KPFM scanning

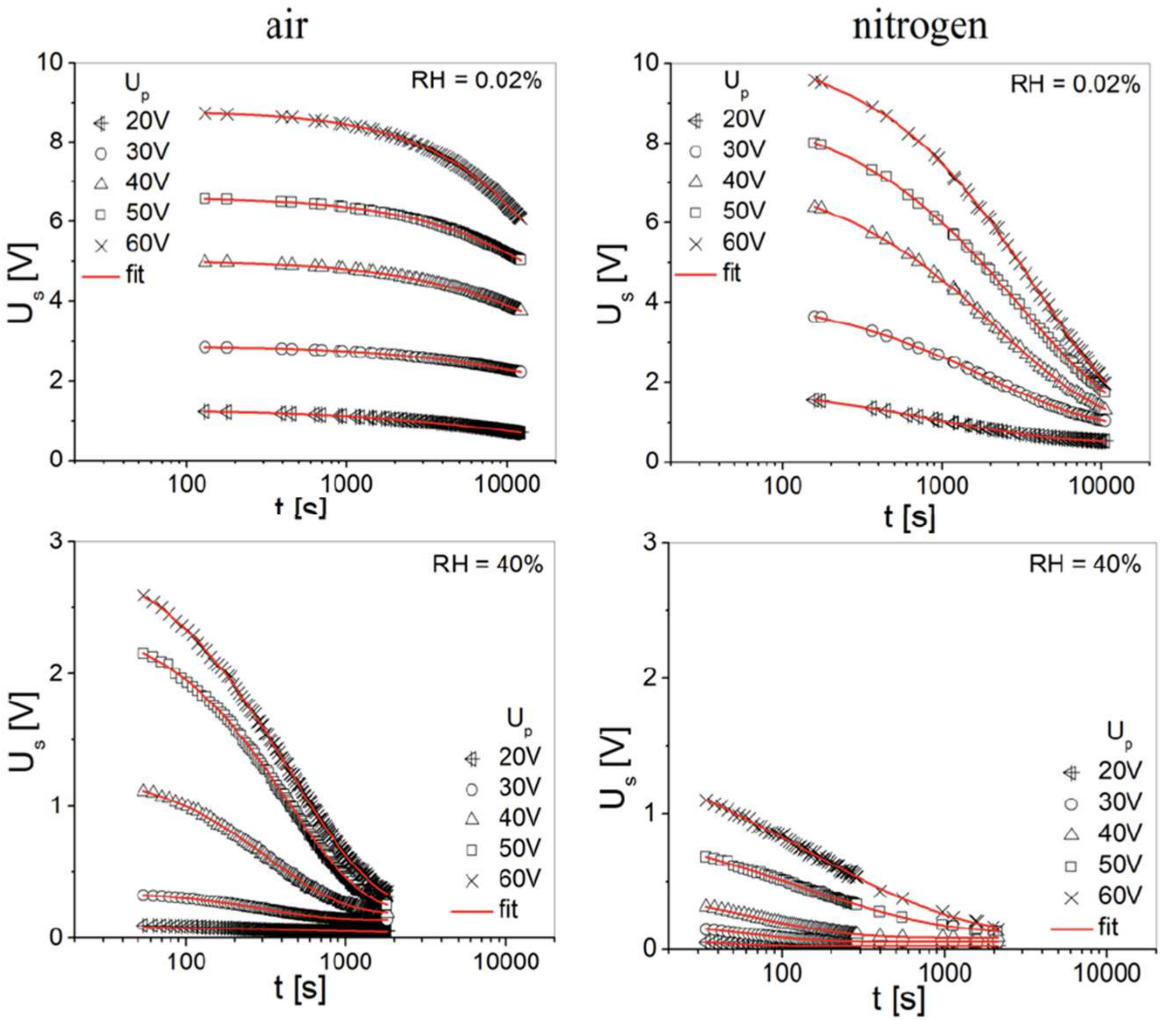




U. Zaghloul et al., *J. Microelec. Reliab.*, 2010

U. Zaghloul et al., *J. Vacuum Science and Technology (in press)*, 2011

Experimental charging characterization: Kelvin Probe Force Microscopy techniques



Vertical scales are different

Surface potential decay with time measured in air (left) and in nitrogen (right) under selected relative humidity levels for charges injected using different pulse amplitudes, *Up*.

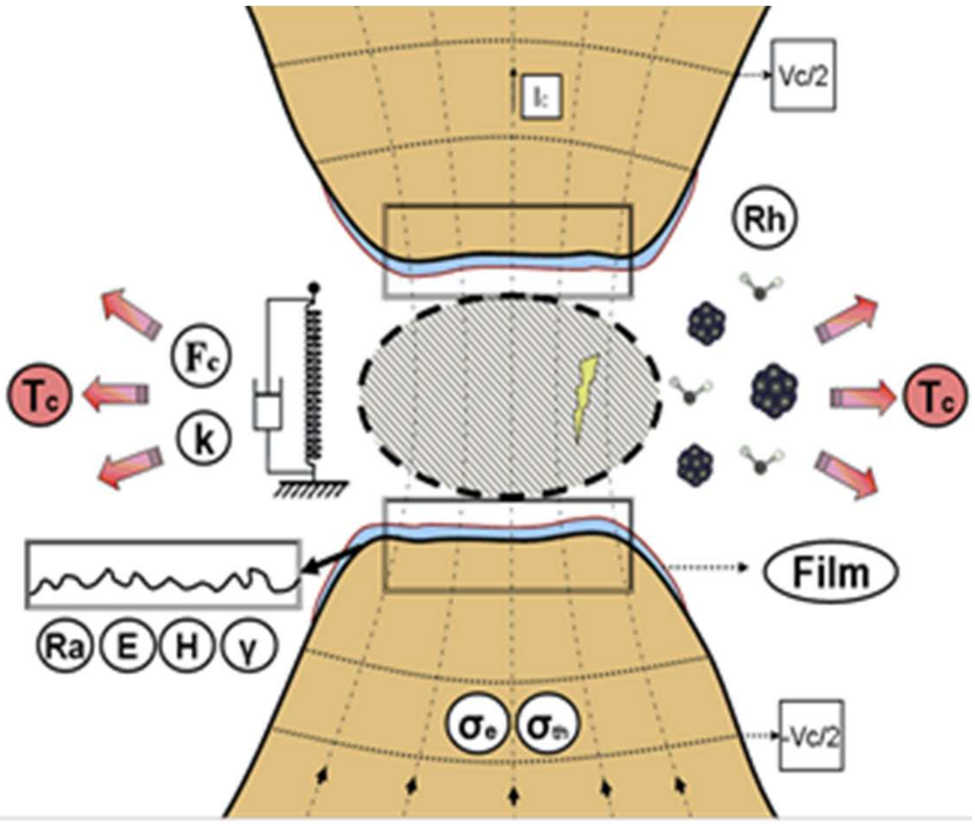
Nanotechnology **22 (2011) 035705 U Zaghloul *et al***

Electrical micro-contacts

- Multi-physical system
  - Mechanical effects
  - Electrical
  - Thermal
  - Chemical
- Ohm's law is not applicable anymore

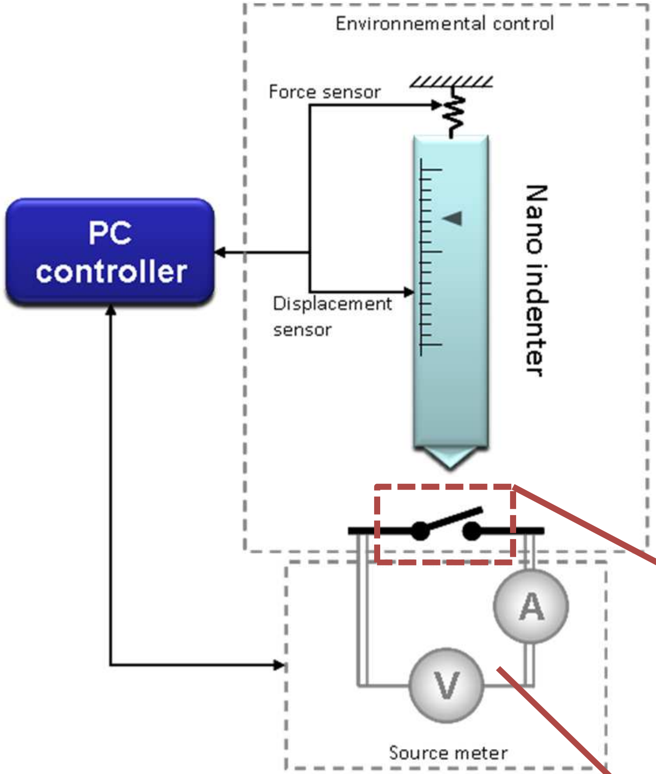
$$R_{Contact} = \underbrace{\Gamma(K) R_{Holm}}_{\text{Diffusive conduction mode}} + \underbrace{R_{Sharvin}}_{\text{Ballistic conduction mode}} \left(+R_{Film}?\right)$$

- The load applied by the actuator may vary with time (charging effect, creep)

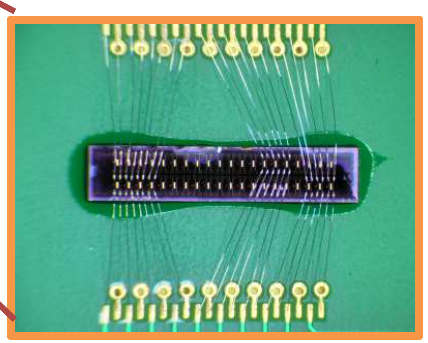


Description of the experimental set-up

Specific contact investigation:



Source Modes	Switching Modes
•Current source or voltage source	Hot switching Cold switching Mechanical switching
Input Parameters	**Range**
•Current level (Ic)	10^{-5} to 1A
•Maximum load applied (L_{max})	1µN to 6mN
•Contact voltage(Uc)	10^{-5} to 40V
•Holding plateau at load max t_{hold}	0 to several min
Environment	Dry nitrogen (< 5% RH)
Outputs	
•Voltage Drop (Vc) or current drop (Ic) [depending on the source mode]	•Contact stiffness (K)
•Tip Displacement (d)	•Contact resistance (Rc)

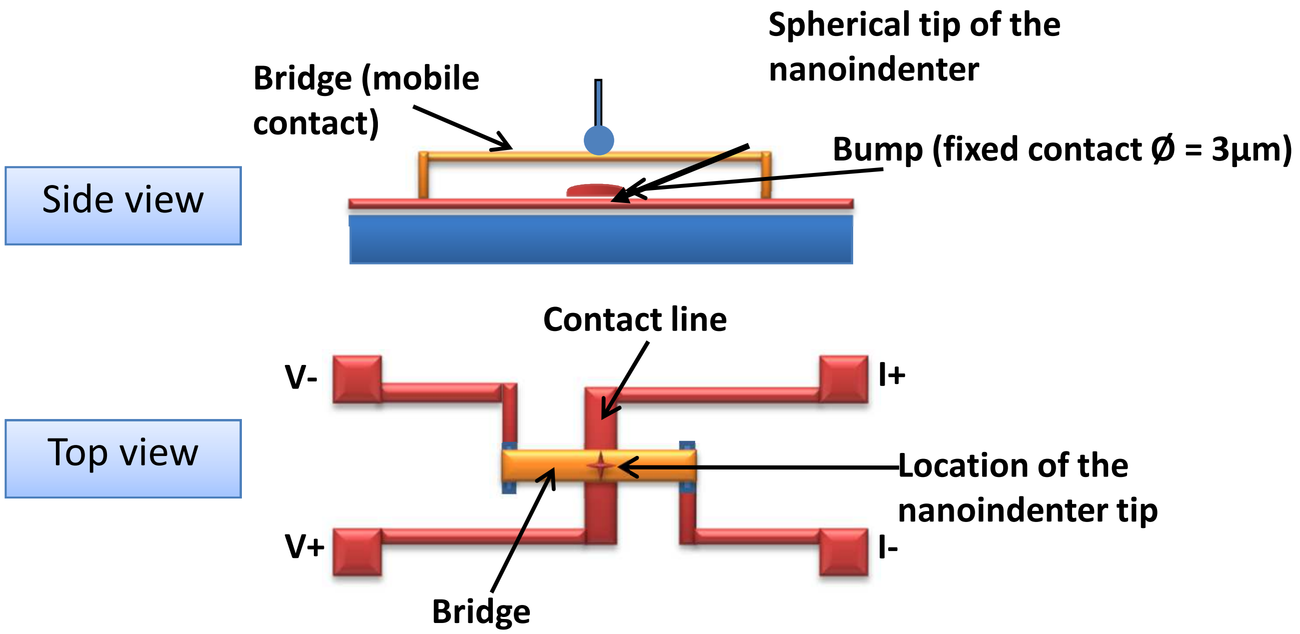


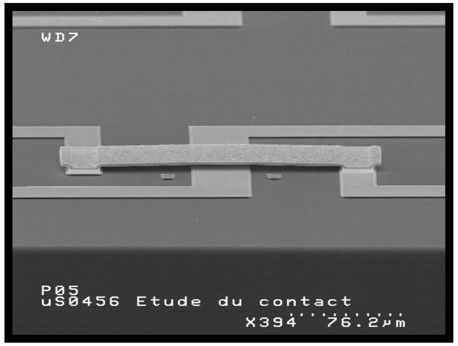
*Contact force resolution = 1µN displacement resolution = 1nm

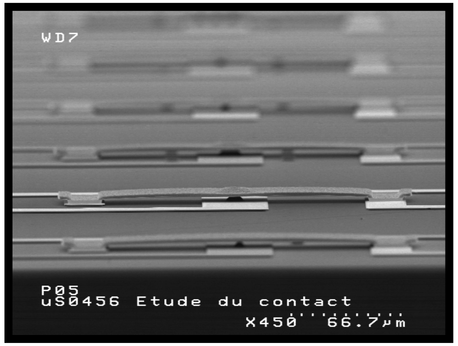
*test structures are reported and micro bonded on a PCB (Printed Circuit Board).

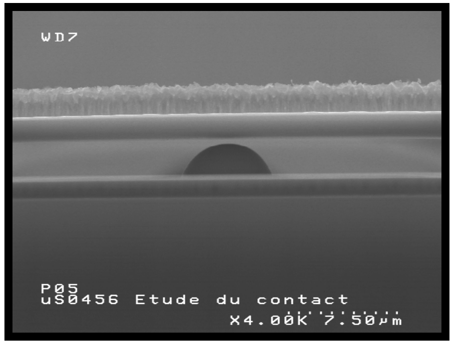
Test vehicles (LETI)

- Cross-rod experiment to compensate for the access resistances (from Holm)

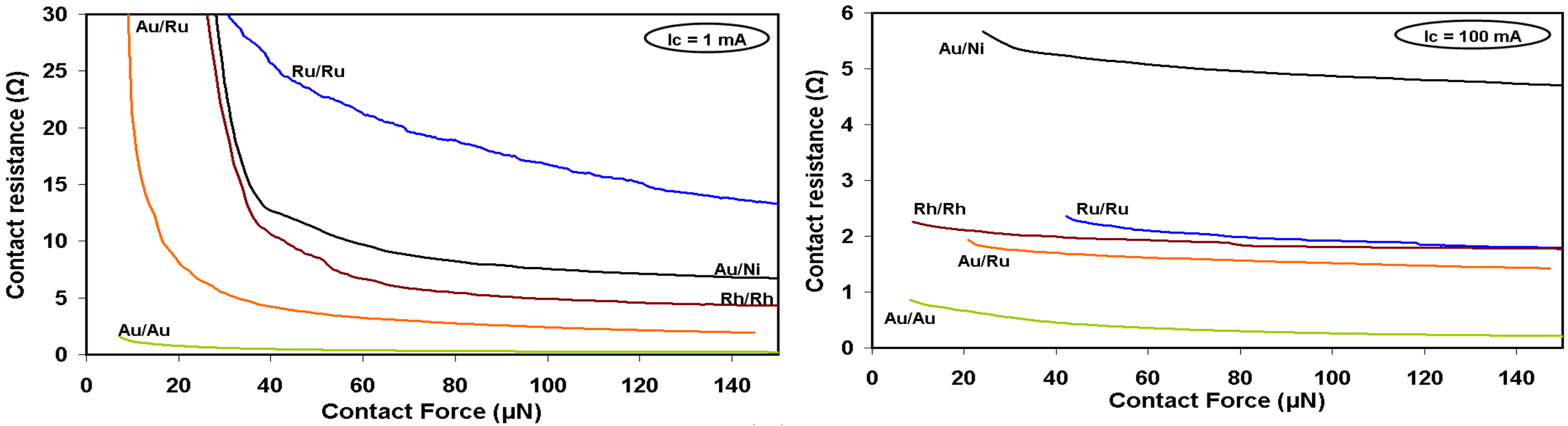








Results: R_C VS F_C



Contact resistance versus contact force as a function of the current flowing through the contact for Au/Ru, Au/Au, Ru/Ru, Rh/Rh and Au/Ni contacts at 1mA and 100mA ($V_{compliance}$ = 1V)

- **Au/Au contact** shows the more stable and the lowest contact resistance beyond contact force about 40µN from 1mA (R_c = 0.49Ω) to 100mA (R_c = 0.45Ω)
- **Rh/Rh contact** reaches a lower contact resistance at 140µN compared to the **Ru/Ru contact** at 1mA. This result could be attributed to the low resistivity of the rhodium compared to the ruthenium.
- **Au/Ru bimetallic contact** is relatively stable at the maximum contact load. From 1mA to 100mA, the contact resistance at 145µN decreases from 1.9Ω to 1.4Ω.

Conclusion

- MEMS components are now bridging the gap between development and successful integration in high-rel applications
- Need for standards, tuned for each family of MEMS
- Coupled approach environmental testing + failure mechanism identification and modelization (for acceleration factors determination)