Technical White Paper Long Term Storage Evaluation of Semiconductor Devices



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ABSTRACT

Since 1998, Texas Instruments and other semiconductor manufacturers have performed multiple studies regarding the storage life of semiconductor devices after assembly and test. These studies accounted for various packaging types and different plating finishes across many different products. The risks of long-term storage are documented in the 2008 publication, *Component Reliability After Long Term Storage* and includes a detailed risk analysis. This paper is a continuation of the assessment on devices stored between 10 and 20 years after manufacturing. JEDEC publication JEP160 outlines best practices and recommendations for the long-term storage of semiconductor products.¹ The data shows that products properly stored in a controlled environment can be stored significantly greater than 15 years. Since the studies have been published, additional package families, including leadless and chip scale packaging, have been introduced. Additional tests have been performed to include these families, while also retesting the package families and finishes from prior studies. Visual inspection, solderability, cross sections, and other reliability tests were performed on the various package families to show how the long-term storage of semiconductor productor products does not affect the reliability or quality of the device regardless of the end use.

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¹ JEDEC Publication JEP160, (2011). *Long-Term Storage for Electronic Solid-State Wafers, Dice, and Devices*



1 Introduction

This paper details the ongoing results of studying the quality, reliability, and usability of semiconductor products after long-term storage in a controlled environment. To better understand long-term storage viability, additional data was collected to further comprehend the time that products can be stored before the reliability can be compromised.

2 Background

Prior to 1995, the U.S military specified electrical retest of devices if a three-year date code window was exceeded. In 1995, the military specification MIL-PRF-19500M that mandated electrical retest after three years was revised and that requirement was removed entirely. The military now prohibits date code restrictions on component orders.² The NEDA (National Electronic Distributor Association) "recommends that date code age restrictions be eliminated from the ordering process."²

Shelf-Life Evaluation of Nickel and Palladium Lead Finish for Integrated Circuits was published in 1998 and validated that this finish had good solderability after eight years in normal packing materials. In 2004, Shelf-Life Evaluation of Lead-Free Component Finishes concluded that the storage period for NiPdAu, NiPd, NiPdAu-Ag, matte Sn, and SnPb lead finish is >8 years as measured by solderability after exposure to a Battelle Class 2 MFG environment. The white paper Component Reliability After Long Term Storage was published in 2008 in support of the storage extension for NiPdAu leaded products >15 years and packaging materials for a minimum of six years under the worst case condition (38°C/100% RH). This was followed by BGA Package Component Reliability After Long-Term Storage in 2009 to include BGA and DSBGA/WCSP product with the long term storage conclusion of > 10 years.

In 2020, a new study validated that semiconductor products can be stored in a controlled environment for a minimum of fifteen years. The results from this study are documented in this technical white paper.

3 Procedure

56 lots of product from different package types (leaded, leadless QFN style, silicon based BGA – DSBGA/WCSP and contact finishes NiPdAu, Sn, or SnAgCu solder balls) were evaluated in this study. The age of the products studied ranged from 10 years and up to 21 years of storage in a controlled environment (<30°C and <80% RH). The acronym LTS (long term storage) is used to identify this aged material.

The product packaging was carefully examined when the samples were received and the Humidity Indicator Card (HIC) was recorded for each lot at the first time opening of the sealed Moisture Barrier Bag (MBB), when applicable. The labels on the bags and boxes were evaluated for legibility and adhesion. MBB and cover tape were assessed and tested for any deterioration in ESD protection through Tribocharging testing. A cover tape peel test was performed to ensure there were no compromising attributes of the cover tape adhesion to the cover tape for long term storage.

The product underwent extensive reliability testing to determine if any adverse effects occurred while storing the devices for a long period of time. They were carefully examined for any evidence of deterioration on the lead or package body. Solderability, which can be the most significant concern with long term storage, was performed on all lots in addition to other reliability testing to determine if there were any detrimental effects.

4 Risk Assessment

The reliability risk to semiconductor products that have been stored for longer period of time is low. In the most recent and prior studies, no evidence of diminishing reliability has been found that would adversely affect the product or the ability for it to be soldered to a PCB for material stored for a long period of time. No failure mechanisms have been identified that would compromise the electrical performance or circuit reliability of LTS devices. HTOL and HTSL qualification data provides the best estimate of parametric performance over time. Devices are biased during HTOL testing; this is the worst case compared to unbiased storage. FIT rates for analog products have been in the single digits for more than a decade. This assures that biased and unbiased devices would remain within data sheet limits far beyond the design and storage life of the device.

² NEDA Publication, (2002). Managing Date Code Restrictions on Orders for Electronic Components



In addition to the studies performed on the long term storage products, package qualifications include humidity testing tests to evaluate the effect of moisture on die metallization (galvanic corrosion). Devices routinely pass high temperature and high humidity testing. All products are stored in a properly controlled environment prior to being shipped. Moisture sensitive products are packaged with appropriate MBB and desiccant based on TI internal specification for moisture sensitivity which aligns with JEDEC J-STD-033C. Packaging material and cover tape was evaluated using Tribocharge testing and showed no issues. Any failure of the MBB would be detected immediately by the HIC discolorations upon opening the package.

5 Products Samples Included in the Evaluation

Table 5-1 lists the evaluated device samples.

Sample Batch #	Product Name	Shelf Storage Age (Years) ⁽²⁾	Terminal Finish	Package Type	Pin Count	Soldering Results. Units Tested/Fail	Moisture Sensitivity Level
1	CC2530F64RHAR	11	NiPdAuAg	VQFN	40	5/0	MSL3
2	CC2531F256RHAR	10	NiPdAuAg	VQFN	40	7/0	MSL3
3	TPS51621RHAR	10	NiPdAu	VQFN	40	7/0	MSL3
4	TPS65182RGZR	10	NiPdAu	VQFN	48	8/0	MSL3
5	BQ25015RHLR	11	NiPdAu	VQFN	20	9/0	MSL3
6	TRF3761-GIRHAR	13	NiPdAuAg	VQFN	40	9/0	MSL3
7	TPS65810RTQR	11	NiPdAu	VQFN	56	9/0	MSL3
8	LP3906SQ-VPFP/NOPB	10	Matte Sn	WQFN	24	9/0	MSL1
9	TS3L500RHUR	15	NiPdAuAg	WQFN	56	8/0	MSL1
10	DS92LV0411SQE/NOPB	10	Matte Sn	WQFN	36	8/0	MSL3
11	TS3L500RHUR	10	NiPdAuAg	WQFN	56	8/0	MSL1
12	TLV70029DSER	10	NiPdAuAg	WSON	6	8/0	MSL 1
13	TPS73418DRVR	12	NiPdAu	WSON	6	10 / 0	MSL 1
14	TPS62750DSKR	11	NiPdAu	WSON	10	10 / 0	MSL 1
15	TPS71926-15DRVR	13	NiPdAu	WSON	6	8/0	MSL 1
16	TPS79425DCQR	15	NiPdAu	SOT-223	6	9/0	MSL2
17	TPS73233DCQR	11	NiPd Au	SOT-223	6	9/0	MSL2
18	TPS73233DCQR	16	Sn	SOT-223	6	9/0	MSL2
19	OPA343NA/3K	20	Sn	SOT-23	5	9/0	MSL 1
20	TLV431AIDBVR	20	Sn	SOT-SC70	5	9/0	MSL 1
21	SN74AHC1G00DBVR	17	NiPdAu	SOT-23	5	9/0	MSL 1
22	LMV331IDCKR	15	NiPdAuAg	SOT-SC70	3	9/0	MSL 1
23	TL431CDBVR	15	NiPdAu	SOT-23	5	9/0	MSL 1
24	REF3112AIDBZT	14	NiPdAuAg	SOT-23	3	10 / 0	MSL 1
25	TL431QDBVT	10	NiPdAu	SOT-23	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
26	TLV809J25DBZT	10	NiPdAu	SOT-23	3	10 / 0	MSL 1
27	SN74LVC1G06DBVR	10	NiPdAu	SOT-23	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
28	SN74AHCT1G86DBVR	10	NiPdAu	SOT-23	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
29	ADS7868IDBVR	10	NiPdAu	SOT-23	6	10 / 0	MSL2
30	OPA2337EA/3K	11	Sn	SOT-23	8	10 / 0	MSL2
31	SN74LVC1G08DCKR	10	NiPdAu	SOT-SC70	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
32	SN74AHCT1G04DCKR	15	NiPdAu	SOT-SC70	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
33	SN74AHC1G02DCKR	15	NiPdAu	SOT-SC70	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
34	LMV321IDCKT	10	NiPdAuAg	SOT-SC70	5	10 / 0	MSL 1
35	TXS0206YFPR	10	N/A	DSBGA	20	10 / 0	MSL 1
36	TLV320AIC3107IYZFR	10	N/A	DSBGA	42	10 / 0	MSL 1
37	WL1251B2LYFBR	11	N/A	DSBGA	104	10 / 0	MSL 1
38	PCM1870YZFR	12	n/a	DSBGA	24	10 / 0	MSL 1
39	LMV641MAX/NOPB	11	Sn	SOIC	8	9/0	MSL 1
40	SN74HC595DR	11	NiPdAu	SOIC	16	10 / 0	MSL 1
41	USBN9604-28MX	10	Sn	SOIC	28	10 / 0	MSL3

Table 5-1. Product Samples



Sample Batch #	Product Name	Shelf Storage Age (Years) ⁽²⁾	Terminal Finish	Package Type	Pin Count	Soldering Results. Units Tested/Fail	Moisture Sensitivity Level
42	LOG2112AIDWR	11	NiPdAu	SOIC	16	9/0	MSL3
43	TL1451ACDR	16	NiPdAu	SOIC	16	9/0	MSL 1
44	SN94754IDR	15	NiPdAu	SOIC	8	10 / 0	MSL3
45	LOG101AIDR	19	NiPdAu	SOIC	8	10 / 0	MSL3
46	SN74AHC00D	21	NiPdAu	SOIC	14	9/0	MSL 1
47	SN74HC02DR	21	NiPdAu	SOIC	14	9/0	MSL 1
S1 ⁽¹⁾	BQ24202DGNR	18	Sn	HVSSOP	8	6/0	MSL1
S2 ⁽¹⁾	MSC1210Y3PAGT	18	Sn	TQFP	64	6/0	MSL3
S3 ⁽¹⁾	OPA2822U/2K5	18	NiPdAu	SOIC	8	6/0	MSL3
S4 ⁽¹⁾	REG101NA-2.85/250	18	NiPdAu	SOT-23	5	6/0	MSL3
S5 ⁽¹⁾	SN75LVDS179D	18	NiPdAu	SOIC	8	5/0	MSL1
S6 ⁽¹⁾	TLV2463CDGSR	18	Sn	VSSOP	10	6/0	MSL1
S7 ⁽¹⁾	TPS75933KTTT	18	Sn	VSSOP	5	6/0	MSL2
S8 ⁽¹⁾	TSB12LV31PZ	19	Sn	LQFP	100	6/0	MSL3
S9 ⁽¹⁾	SH6950DAAOPFP	17	NiPdAu	HTQFP	80	6/0	MSL3

 Table 5-1. Product Samples (continued)

(1) The products S1 through S9 were the original 2008 risk assessment and were continuously stored in the Singapore Product Distribution Center (PDC) and retested for this paper.

(2) Age determined as of March 2021.

6 Packaging Materials Evaluation

The sample products used in this study were retrieved from storage warehouses and shipped to the evaluating TI reliability lab. Original packing materials from the actual production time were preserved and evaluated. Upon receiving the material in the evaluating lab, the outer cardboard box, also referred to as shipping box, was inspected and documented. Device information labels continued to properly adhere to the box after 20 years of warehouse storage and were readable.



Figure 6-1. Sample #47 Image of Shipping Box as Received



Figure 6-2. Sample #10 Image of Shipping Box as Received



Figure 6-3. Sample #47 Label on Box



Figure 6-4. Sample #10 Label on Box



Packaging Materials Evaluation



Figure 6-5. Sample #47 Opened Box, MSL 1



Figure 6-7. Sample #10 Opened MBB, HIC, Desiccant and Reel



Figure 6-6. Sample #42 Opened Box, MSL 3 Packing



Figure 6-8. Sample #10 HIC Detail View

The Humidity Identification Card (HIC) had been checked immediately after opening the MBB. No HIC samples showed a change in the color dots indicating a change of the moisture content inside the MBB.

The functionality of the HIC samples had been checked by storing the cards at room conditions for 15 minutes and in a 30°C/60% humidity oven for 15 minutes. The color dots from the tested HIC turned pink as expected for the environment conditions they had been exposed to during the test. This proves that the HIC cards were still functional after the long storage time in the MBB.

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LEVEL

Figure 6-9. HIC Card Out of Sealed Figure 6-10. HIC After 15 Minutes MBB at 30°C / 60% Rh



Figure 6-11. HIC After 15 Minutes at Room Air Condition of 23°C/ ≈30% Rh



7 Tribocharge Evaluation – ESD Testing

The measurement for the originally used tape and reel packing material was made in accordance with ANSI/ESD STM11.13-2018 Two-Point Resistance Measurement. This specific type of testing was used due to the size of cover tape pockets.



Figure 7-1. Cover Tape Inside Resistivity Measurement



Figure 7-2. Cover Tape Bottom



Figure 7-3. Cover Tape Pocket Side Resistivity

The pocket tape (black) is in the conductive range, while the cover tape (clear) is in the dissipative range as expected. No degradation was observable for the tested material.

A concentric ring setup was used to evaluate a large surface area of each original MBB. All bags were found to be in the expected dissipative range.



Figure 7-4. Measurement of ESD Bag

8 Cover Tape Peel Strength Evaluation

8.1 Test Setup

A sample strip was cut from the original tape and reel and the peel force of the cover tape was measured during the removal of the cover tape. The test is done to confirm that the cover tape adhesion did not change over the long term storage of the reel. The peel force of the cover tape was measured within the 10 gram minimum force and 130 gram maximum limit according industry standard EIA 481. The peeling speed of the cover tape was set to 300 mm per minute. This test is also referenced as a *peel-back* test in the industry.







Figure 8-1. Cover Tape Peel Strength Test Setup



Figure 8-2. Cover Tape Peel Strength Test

9 Cover Tape Peel Strength Measurement Results



Figure 9-1. Cover Tape Peel Strength Test Result for 16 mm Tape. Reel #16 Manufactured September 2005



Figure 9-2. Cover Tape Peel Strength Test Result for 8 mm Tape. Reel #20 Manufactured December 2000

10 Solderability Evaluation 10.1 Test Description

Samples from each of the selected lots were tested for solderability using the Surface Mount Process Simulation Test (Test S1 of JEDEC standard J-STD-002E). Lead-free (SnAgCu) solder paste, with no-clean flux, was used to reflow at ≈240°C peak package temperature in air atmosphere.

Figure 10-1 shows how solder paste printing is performed on a ceramic substrate using a manual solder stencil fixture. The solder paste stencils are laser cut and electro polished. After printing the solder paste on the ceramic plate substrate as shown in Figure 10-2, the substrate is fixed in a movable table under the microscope as shown in Figure 10-3 to align the solder paste print pattern with the component leads in the holder as shown in Figure 10-6 through an overlay optical image.

Solderability Evaluation





Figure 10-1. Solder Stencil in Holder with Solder



Figure 10-2. Solder Paste Printed



Figure 10-3. Component Placement Equipment



Figure 10-4. Component Placement Equipment



Figure 10-5. Component Placement Arm



Figure 10-6. Overlay Image Package of Lead and Solder Paste



Figure 10-7. Side Camera View for Final Placement Height



Figure 10-8. Placement Tool on Substrate



Figure 10-9. Placed Component on Substrate

The ceramic substrates were run through the convection reflow oven with a measured package temperature of \approx 240°C and air atmosphere (Compressed Dry Air purge).

After reflow, the soldered products were cleaned in an ultrasonic bath with flux removal agent followed by DI water rinse before the optical inspection of the solder wetting on the package leads.



Solderability Test Results



Figure 10-10. Reflow Oven

Figure 10-11. Substrate on Transport Belt

Figure 10-12. Ultrasonic Flux Cleaning

Samples from Table 5-1 were tested for solderability with a typical sample size of 9-10 units per lot. Example images from the different packages and storage time are shown in the Section 11.1.

The package samples used for solderability testing were picked out of the tape and reel or from tubes baked for four hours at 155°C in dry air to simulate standard J-STD-002 aging and then placed on the printed solder paste pattern on the ceramic plate.

11 Solderability Test Results

11.1 Leadless Package

Sample batch #6: 13 years storage, MSL 3, lead finish: NiPdAu



Figure 11-1. Unit After Bake 4Hr/ 150°C



Figure 11-2. Solder Paste Print Patern



Figure 11-3. Bottom View After Test



Figure 11-4. Side View



Figure 11-5. Cross Section Through Thermal Pad, Showing Intermatillic Between Base Ni Layer on Copper and Solder



11.2 SOT (Small Outline Transistor) Package

Sample batch #30: 11 years storage, MSL2, SOT23 DCN, *lead finish*: post assembly Tin (Sn) plated



Figure 11-6. Unit After Bake 4hr/ 150°C



Figure 11-7. Print Pattern



Figure 11-8. Bottom View After Test





Figure 11-9. Lead Side View After Figure 11-10. Lead Side View After Bake Soldering

Sample batch #21: 17 years storage, MSL1, SOT23 DBV, *lead finish*: pre-plated NiPdAu



Figure 11-11. Unit After Bake 4hr/ 150°C



Figure 11-12. Print Pattern



Figure 11-13. Bottom View After Test







Figure 11-14. Lead Side View After Figure 11-15. Lead Side View After Bake Soldering

11.3 SOIC (Small Outline Integrated Circuit)

Sample batch #46: 21 years storage, MSL1, SOIC D, lead finish: pre-plated NiPdAu



Figure 11-16. Unit After Bake 4Hr/ Figure 11-17. Solder Paste Print 150°C



Pattern



Figure 11-18. Bottom View After Test







Figure 11-19. Lead Side View After Figure 11-20. Lead Side View After Bake Soldering

Figure 11-21. Lead Side View Soldered PCB



11.4 QFP (Quad Flat Pack)

Sample batch #S8: 18 years storage, MSL3, TQFP 100 pin, lead finish: post assembly plated Sn



Figure 11-22. Package Top View



Figure 11-23. Solder Past Print Corner



Figure 11-24. Bottom View After Test







Figure 11-25. Lead Side View Original

Figure 11-26. Lead Side View After Figure 11-27. Lead Soldered on Soldering

PCB

11.5 BGA (Ball Grid Array)/WCSP (Wafer Level Chip Scale Package)

Sample Batch #38: 12 years storage, MSL1, wafer chip scale package (WCSP) 24 SnAgCu solder balls



Figure 11-28. Unit After Bake 4 hr/ 150°C



Figure 11-29. Bottom View After Test



Figure 11-30. Solder Paste Print Pattern



Figure 11-31. Side View After Bake



Figure 11-32. Side View After Soldering



Figure 11-33. Side View Soldered on PCB



12 Summary of Results

- Reliability of the semiconductor devices stored in an environmentally controlled warehouse for an extended period of time up to 21 years was assessed. No failure mechanisms were identified.
- ESD performance of tape and reel samples was comparable to new tape and pocket samples.
- The HIC were confirmed to be functional after LTS.
- The desiccant used for moisture sensitive product is active for >15 years.
- No degradation in ESD performance or moisture ingress was observed on the MBB when stored in a controlled environment.
- Solderability of the package pins met all expectations and is comparable with the solderability performance of current devices.

13 Conclusion

Advancements in lead-frame technology, packing materials, work methods, and inventory logistics have made it possible to further extend the time between manufacturing semiconductor products and delivering to customers. This extended storage time does not impact product performance or the customers product shelf life. In multiple studies performed since 1998, no evidence of diminishing reliability has been found that would adversely affect the product or the ability for it to be soldered to a PCB. No failure mechanisms have been identified that would compromise the circuit reliability of LTS devices. Based on these studies, TI will eliminate limitations on the storage durations. TI will continue to collect data on more samples and as the data directs, TI will continue to adjust the storage conditions and duration for various products.

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15 Glossary of Terms

BGA	Ball Grid Array Package – a package with solder balls (globules) attached at the package bottom side for electrical contact.
Desiccant	A hygroscopic substance used to remove moisture from moisture barrier bags.
Humidity Indicator Card	(HIC) – a card printed with a moisture sensitive chemical (cobalt chloride) that changes from blue to pink in the presence of water vapor.
Long Term Storage	(LTS) – storage of devices in an uncontrolled indoor environment for more than two years. In some publication also <i>Extended Shelf Life</i> (ESL) is used.
Moisture Barrier Bag	(MBB) – storage bag manufactured with a flexible laminated vapor barrier film that restricts transmission of water vapor (also called Dry Pack Back).
Nickel, Palladium, Gold	(NiPdAu) – metal layers that are pre-plated on leadframes to enable solderability.
NiPdAu	Nickel, palladium, gold – composition of lead finish which is plated on the bare copper leadframe with nickel being the first on the copper and followed by palladium and gold plating step.
NiPdAuAg	Is a variation in the industry where the AuAg plating is a composition in the plating bath.
QFN	Quad Flat no Leads package – a package with flat contact areas at the package bottom for electrical contacts.
QFP	Quad Flat package – a package with formed metal leads at the package sides for electrical contacts.
SAC / SnAgCu	Solder paste metal composition, tin, silver, copper content.
Shelf Life	The time that moisture sensitive devices may be stored in MBB with desiccant and HIC or MSL 1 devices stored at room ambient.
Sn	Tin, composition of lead finish which is plated on the bare copper leadframe surfaces extending the package after the package encapsulation process completed.
SOIC	Small Outline Integrated Circuit package – a package with formed metal leads at the package sides for electrical contacts.
SOT	Small Outline Transistor Package – a package with formed metal leads at the package sides for electrical contacts.
Water Vapor Transmission Rate	(WVTR) – a measure of permeability of MBBs to water vapor.
WCSP	Wafer Chip Scale Package or Die Size BGA – silicon die with attached solder balls or globules at the bottom of the package for electrical contact.

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