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1977 - 2017

Approaches to Metallization for Poly-Si/SiO_x Passivated Contacts

M. Schnabel, W. Nemeth, S. Theingi, A. Kale, T.R. Klein, B.G. Lee, M.F.A.M van Hest, S. Agarwal, D.L. Young, and P. Stradins

7th Workshop on Metallization & Interconnection for Crystalline Silicon Solar Cells
October 24th, 2017, Konstanz, Germany

NREL/PR-5900-70266

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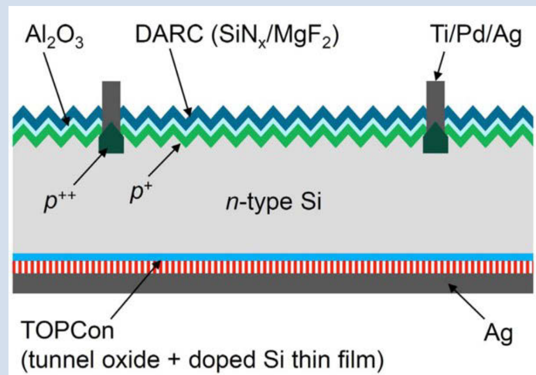
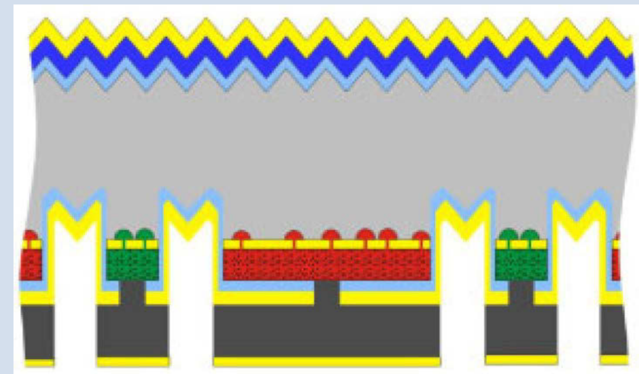
Why Poly-Si/SiO_x ?

Poly-Si/SiO_x passivated contacts on Cz Si are focus of Si PV research at NREL since 2013 [1,2].

FhG-ISE: TOPCon, 25.7% [3]	ISFH: POLO, 25.0% [4]
	
Used for BSF of front-back cell	Used for emitter and BSF in IBC cell

1 Lee *et al.*, 40th IEEE PVSC (2014)
2 Nemeth *et al.*, 40th IEEE PVSC (2014)
3 Richter *et al.*, *Solmat*, Vol. 173, pp. 96-105, 2017.
4 Haase, *et al.*, *JJAP*, vol. 56, p. 08MB15, 2017.

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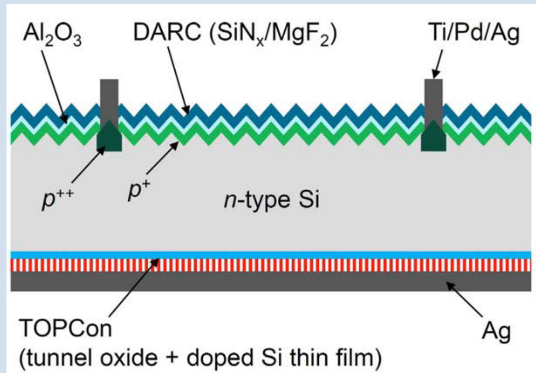	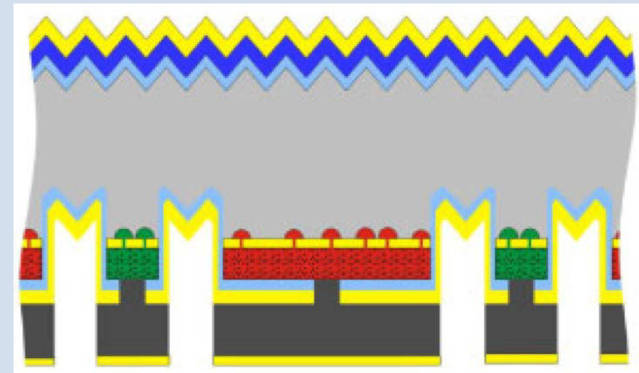
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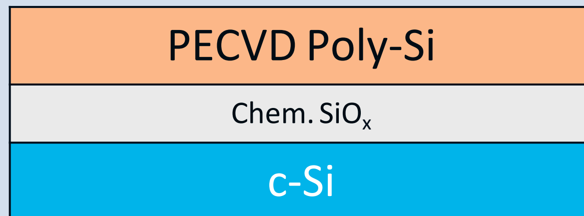
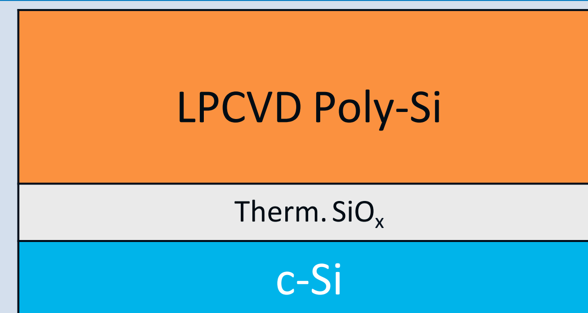
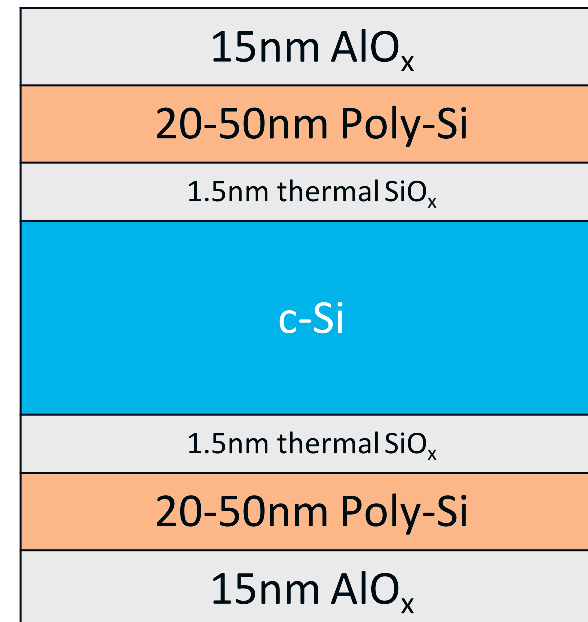
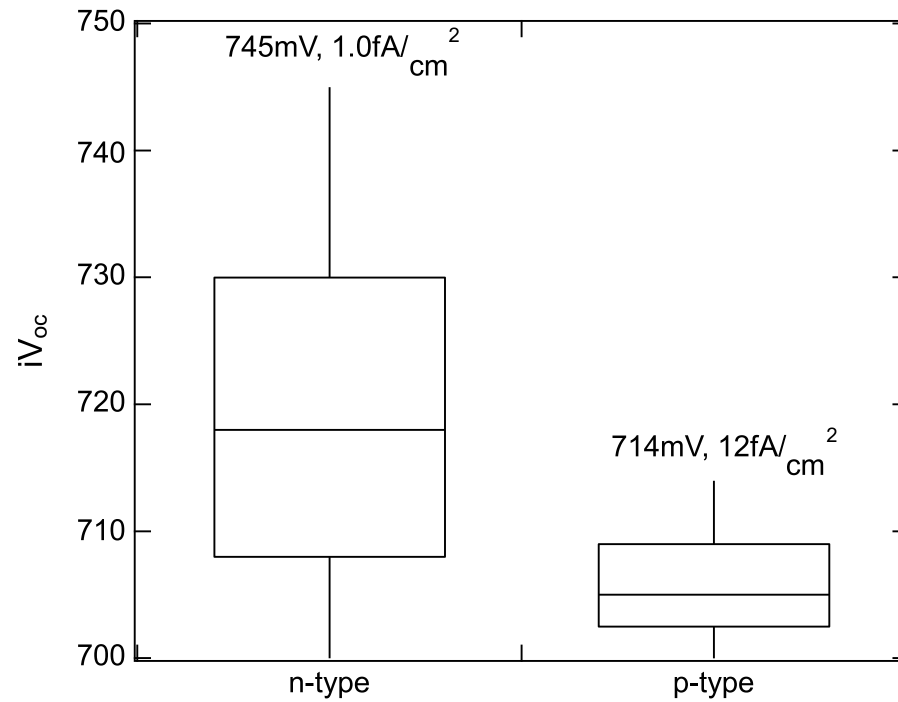
	

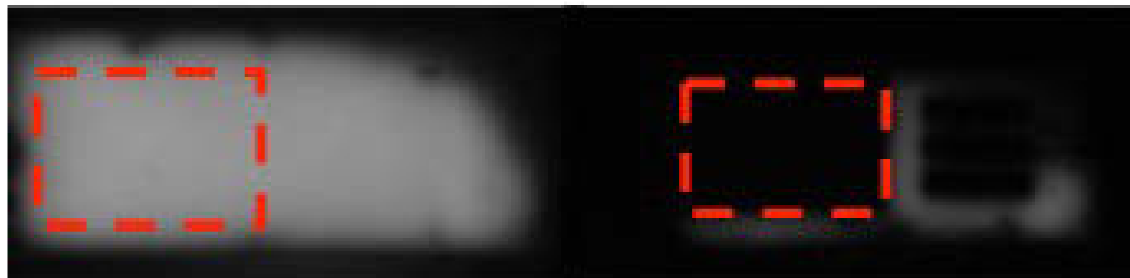
Poly-Si/SiO_x at NREL

1. RCA-cleaned Cz-Si
2. 1.5nm thermal SiO_x
3. 20-50nm PECVD a-Si:H
4. Crystallizaeon, 850°C 30min
5. 15nm ALD AlO_x
6. FGA, 400°C 1h



Poly-Si/SiO_x at NREL





Outline

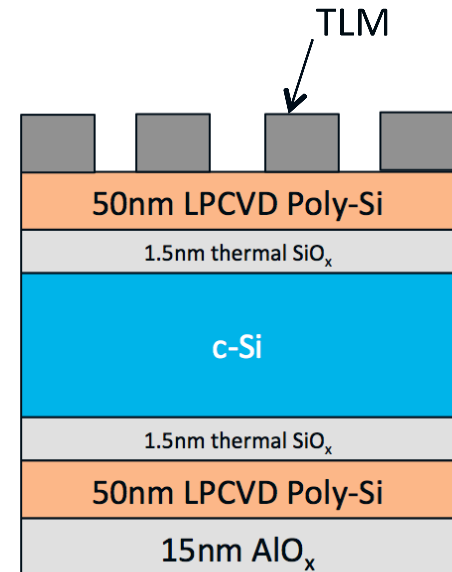
- Metal
- Spacer Layers
  - a-Si:H
  - TCO
  - Conduceng Adhesive
- Summary

Metals

- Used in-situ doped LPCVD poly-Si
- Keep AlO_x on unmetallized side
- Inieal iV_{oc}:
  - 735-740 mV (n-type)
  - 704-713 mV (p-type)

- Metals
  - 4nm Ti / 1µm Ag, thermal
  - 4nm Ti / 1µm Ag, e-beam
  - 1µm Al, e-beam
  - 1µm Al:1wt%Si, e-beam

- All metals 1µm thick, at 5A/s
- FGA: 200-400°C

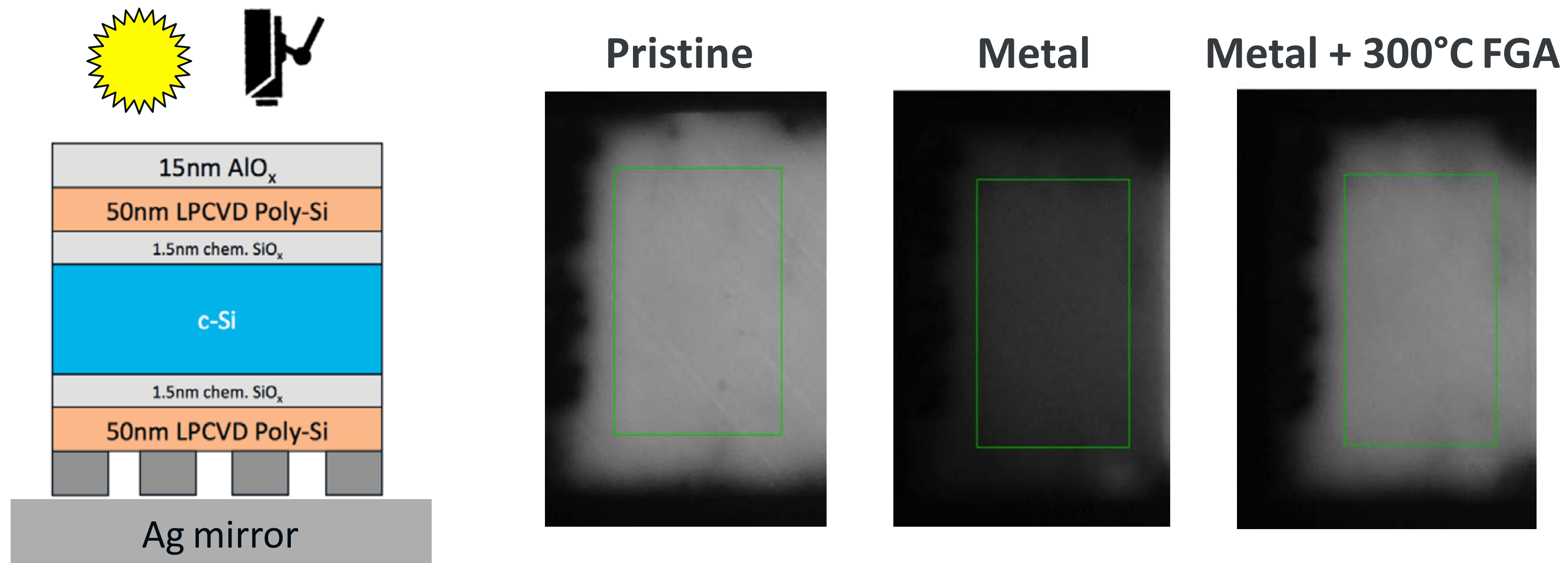


Metals – ΔiV evaluation

- Quantify metallization damage from PL via implied voltage loss, ΔiV, derived from PL intensity before and ager metal:

$$\otimes iV = \frac{kT}{q}\ln\left(\frac{I_{after}}{I_{before}}\right)$$

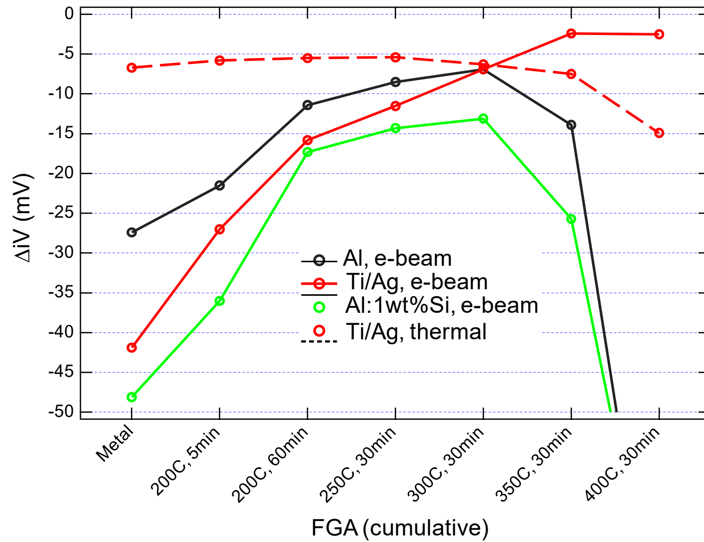
- Measure on mirror to minimize effects of changing opecs

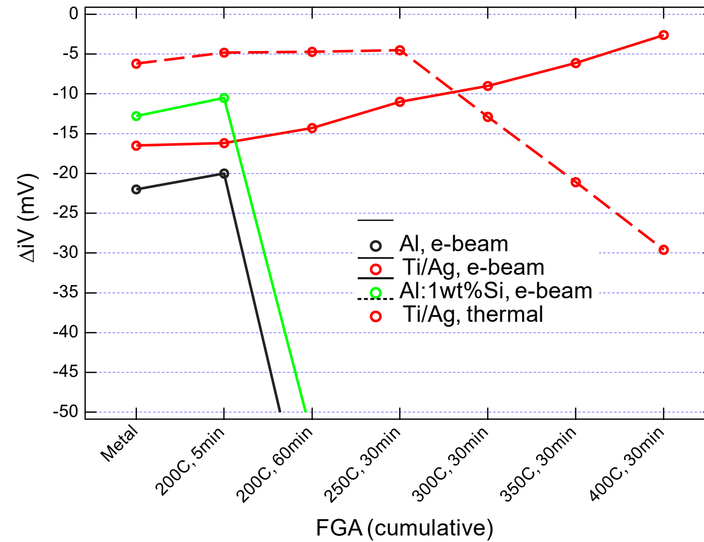


Metals

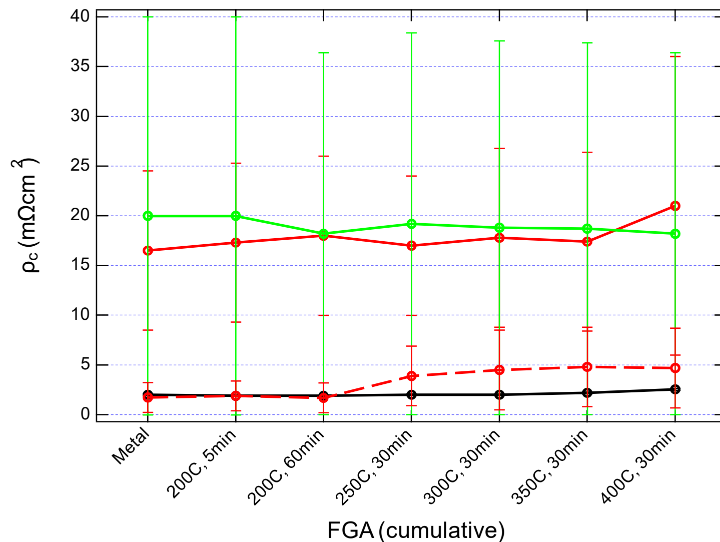
n-type | p-type

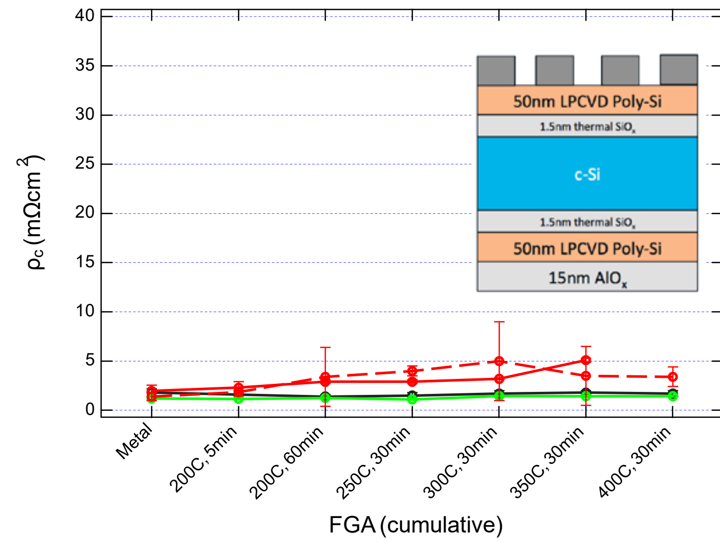
ΔiV





ρ_c



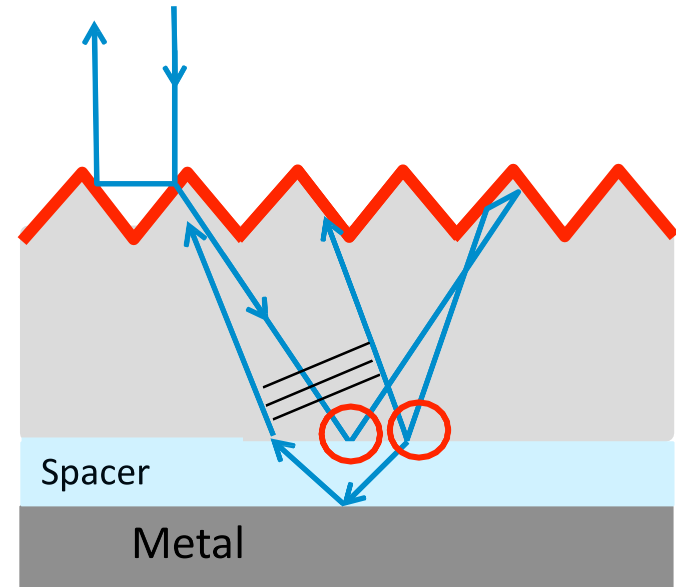


Metals - Conclusions

- Thermal evaporation less damaging
- E-beam damage of some metals anneals out
- Other metals kill contact before e-beam damage anneals out fully
- E-beam damage less severe for p-type (in ΔiV terms), but more prone to degradation upon FGA.

Spacers

- Metallization damage could be mitigated by spacer between poly-Si and metal.
- Can also improve light trapping
- Less sensitivity to reflectance of metal



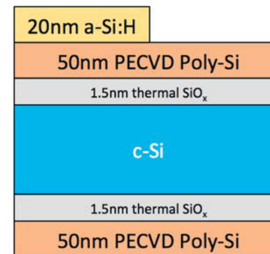
Calculated maximum J_{SC} for 150µm Si wafer cell assuming perfect textured front ARC

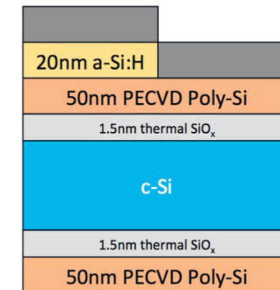
Back structure	Ag metal	Al metal
Flat rear, direct metal	41.58 mA/cm^2	41.15 mA/cm^2
Textured rear, direct metal	42.07	41.31
Textured rear, dielectric spacer (150 nm SiO_2)	42.61	42.50

Ben Lee, 2015

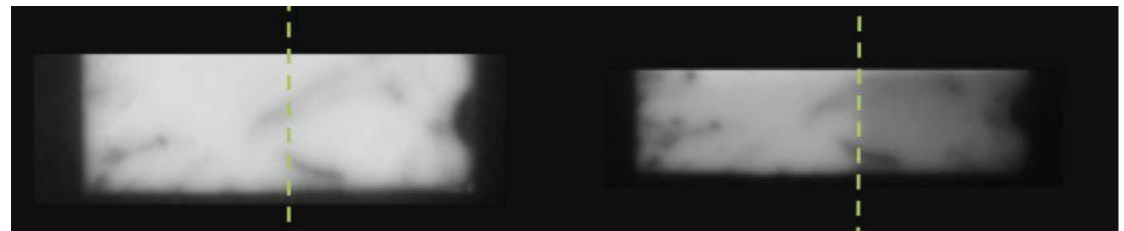
Spacers – a-Si:H

- Thin a-Si:H spacer reduces damage
- Attributed to covering of pinholes in poly-Si
- Negligible additional series resistance

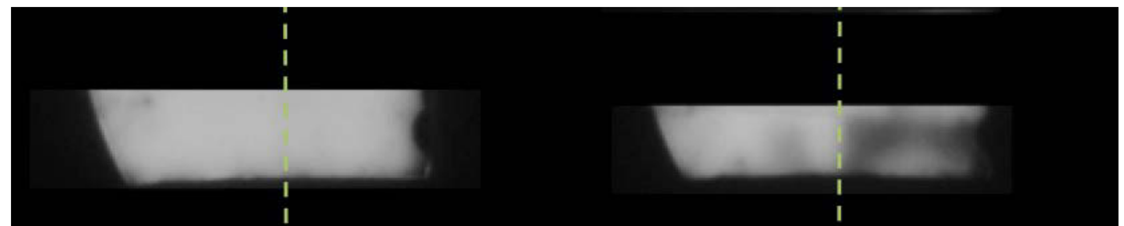




n-type

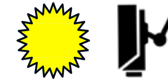


p-type

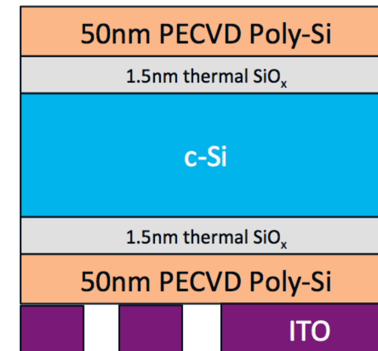


Nemeth *et al.*, 41st IEEE PVSC, Nemeth *et al.*, MRS Spring Meeeng 2015

Spacers – thermal ITO



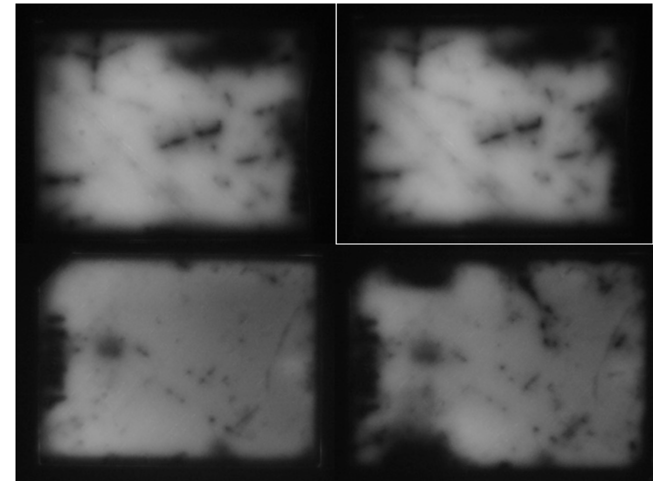
- Evaporation of In-Sn alloy in O_2 ambient.
- Deposition of ITO without sputter damage (ΔiV<5mV)
- Expected to shield metallization damage
- Contact resistivities somewhat high
  - 23 mΩcm² to n-poly-Si
  - 37 mΩcm² to p-poly-Si



Before ITO　　Ager ITO

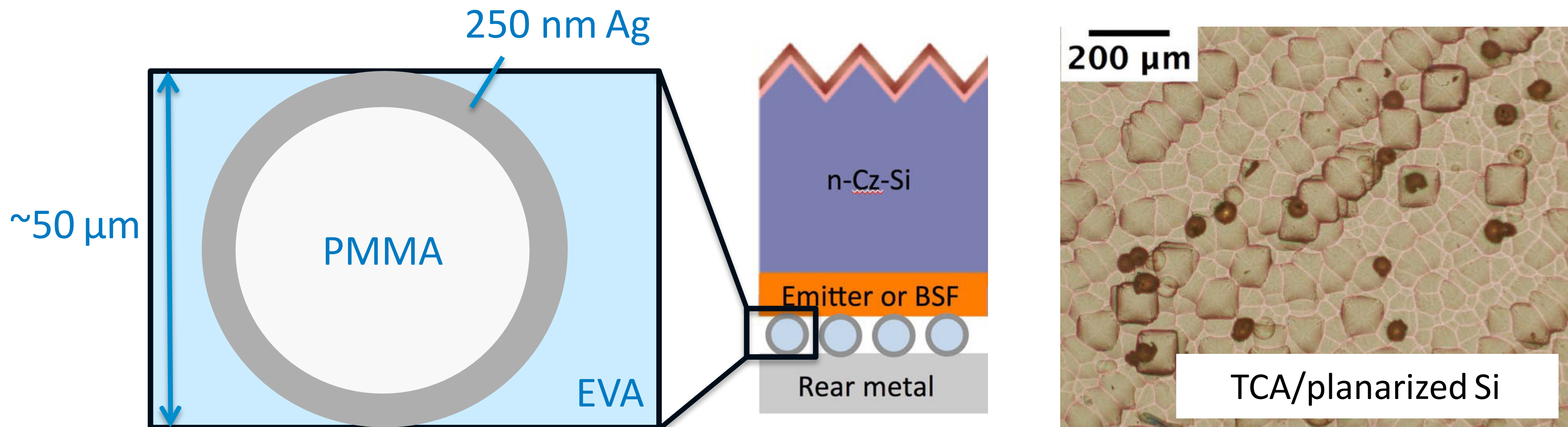
n-poly
733mV
0.1s

p-poly
667mV
1s



Spacers - Conductive Adhesive

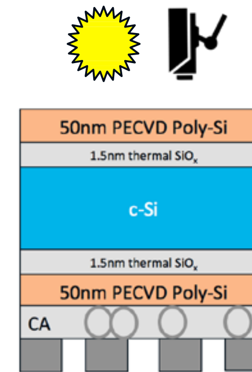
- EVA with metal-coated microspheres [1,2]
- Bond metal to Si – Si doesn’t see metal preparation
- A single sphere bridges conduceve adhesive (CA)
  - anisotropic conductivity
  - can conform to rough surface
- 10 area% microspheres yields <0.4 Ωcm² between Ag surfaces

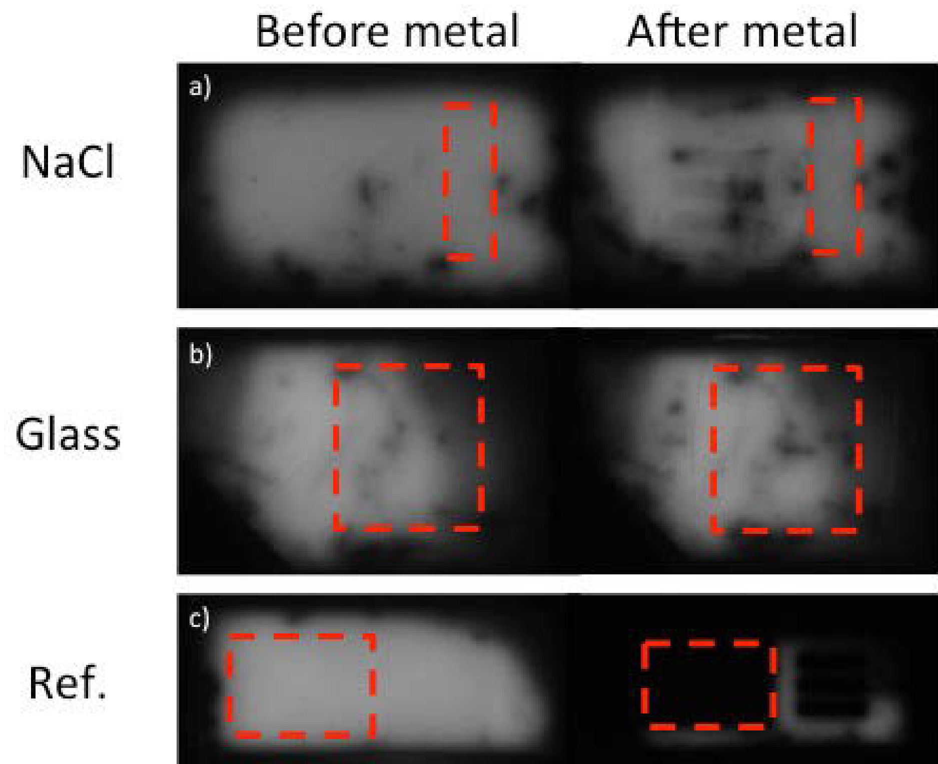


[1] T.R. Klein *et al.*, 44th IEEE PVSC, [2] M. Schnabel *et al.*, 44th IEEE PVSC

Spacers – Conductive Adhesive

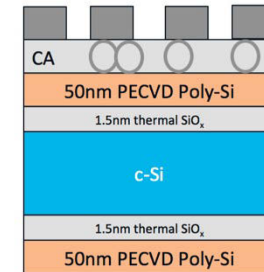
- PL imaging before and ager metallization:
  - Ti/Ag/Pd stack, e-beam
- Metal transfer via NaCl and glass both maintain iV_{oc} (<5 mV change)
- Same e-beam process directly on passivated contact→ 120 mV drop



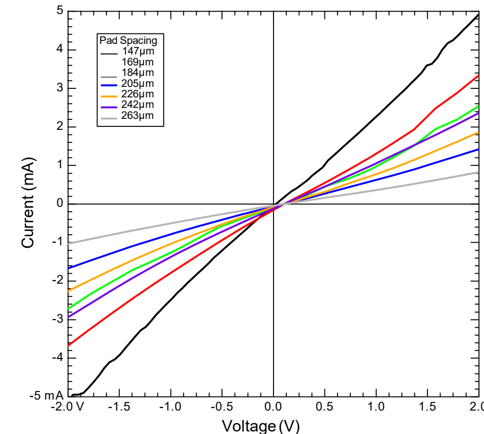


Spacers - Conductive Adhesive

- Ohmic IV curves



- ρ_c=4-6 Ωcm^2
- $\rho_c \leq 1$ Ωcm^2 feasible with more microspheres

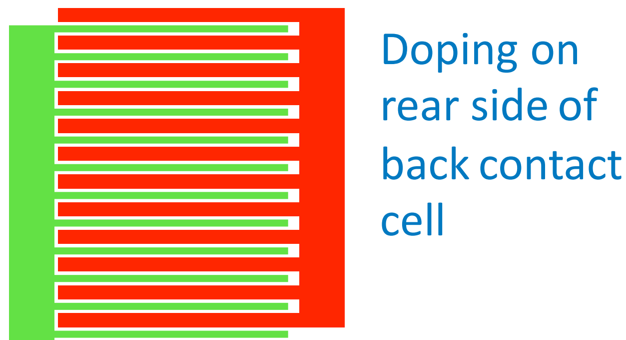


- $R_{c, sphere}$ = 3000-8000 Ω (~0.1Ω within sphere shell)
- $\rho_c \leq 0.1$ Ωcm^2 requires improvement of microsphere/poly-Si contact
  - Increase effeceve contact area

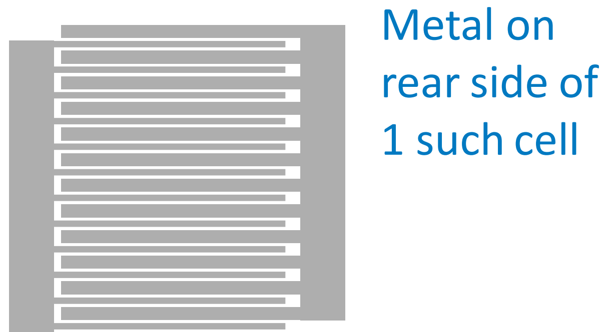
Area% MS	ρ_c
1%	6 Ωcm^2
4%	4 Ωcm^2

Spacers - Conductive Adhesive

- Pattern all metal for metallizing back-contact solar cells, and for interconnecting them, onto a backsheet
- Use CA to attach non-metallized cells. No shunts if area% low
- Creates opportunity for cheaper, and more efficient modules

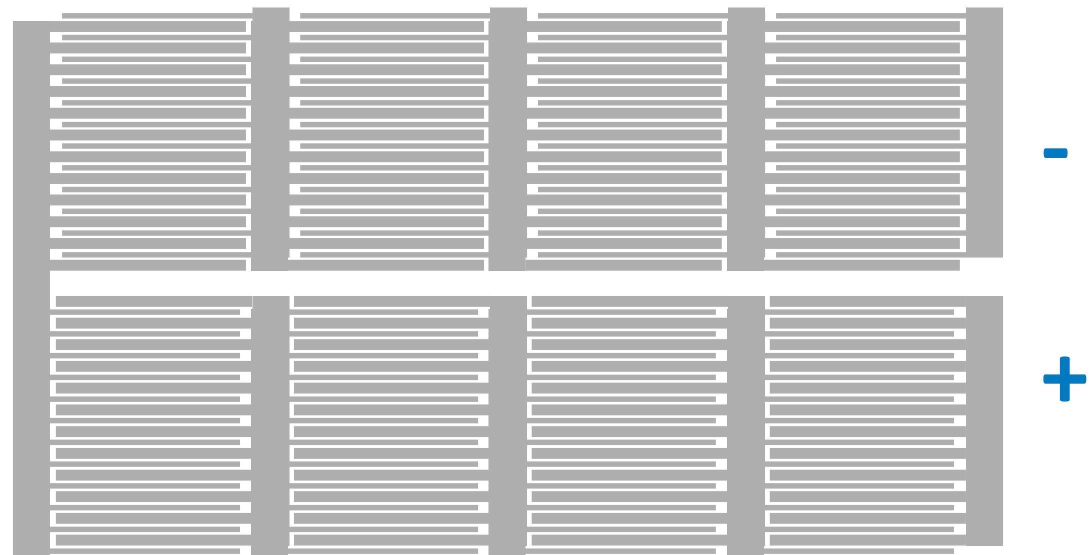


Doping on rear side of back contact cell



Metal on rear side of 1 such cell

Metal + Series Connection for 8 cells.



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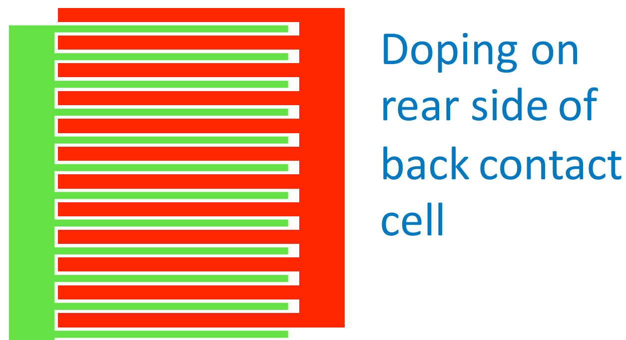
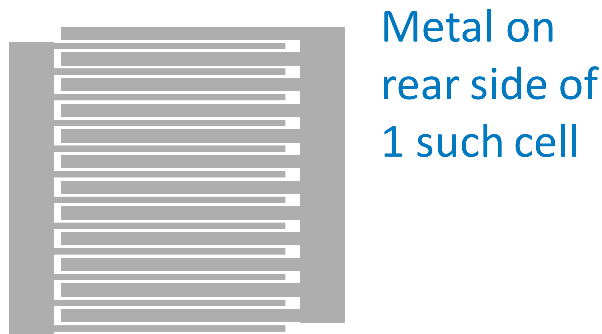


Doping on rear side of back contact cell



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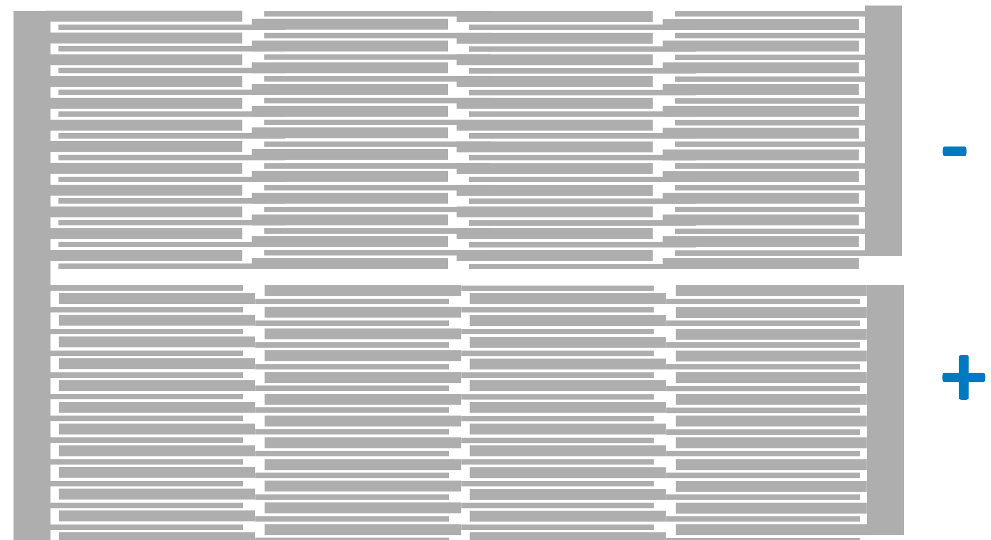

Conclusion

- Thermal evaporation preferable to e-beam
- Some e-beam metals can work
  - Key factor is whether damage is annealed out before metal kills the contact
  - p-type fails sooner upon FGA
- Poly-Si can be shielded from direct metal contact with spacers
- Spacers can provide additional benefits
  - Improved optics
  - Streamlined module processing

Thank you for your attention

Funding for this work was provided by the United States Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, contract Solar Energy Technologies Program DE-EE00030301 (SuNLaMP) and under Contract No. DE-AC36-08GO28308.

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