

Dark-field Inspection of Wafer Defects

An EM Explorer Console Tutorial
(updated for v6.3)

Overview

- ❑ This tutorial describes, step by step, an example script for wafer defect inspection simulations using EM Explorer Pro 6.3
 - The script can be found in the Examples\dark_field_defect_Inspection\ directory of EM Explorer distribution

- ❑ It demonstrates 3 simulation capabilities of EM Explorer Pro 6.3
 - FDTD simulation of wafer near field
 - Calculation of far-field spectrum of the reflected field in free space
 - Imaging of the reflected field onto a detector thru a lens, a frequency filter and a polarizer

Defect Inspection System

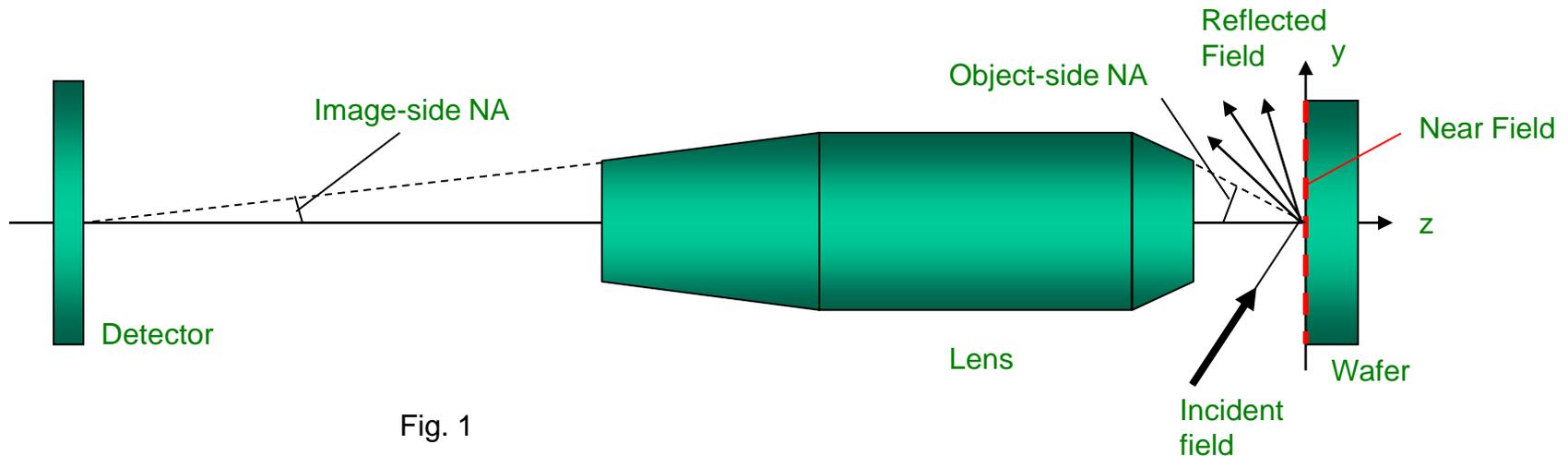


Fig. 1

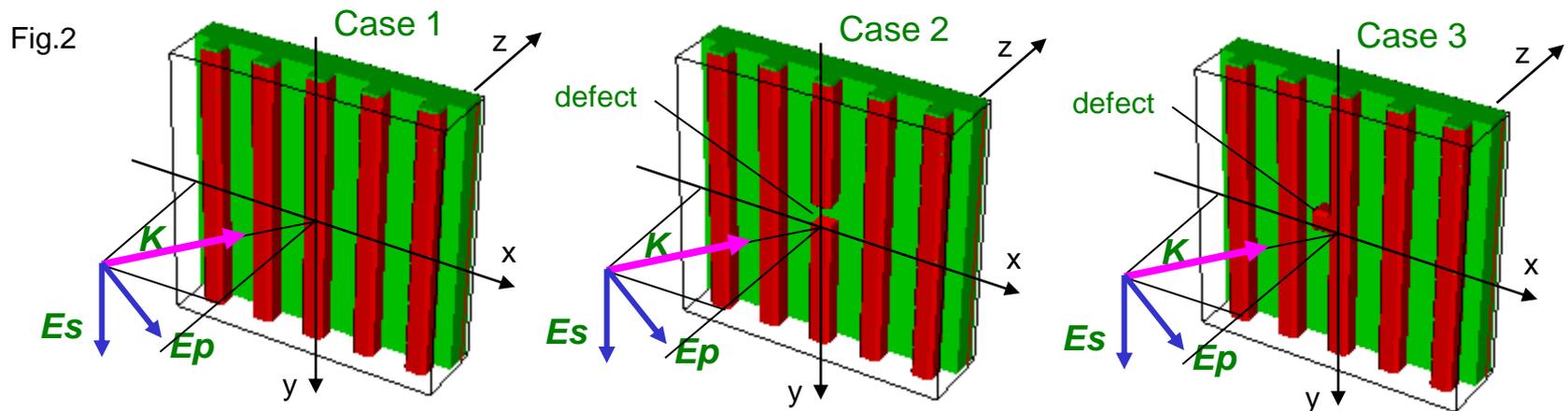
- ❑ This example script simulates the above dark-field defect inspection system
- ❑ The wafer is illuminated by an oblique incidence planewave
- ❑ The scattered light of a defect is collected by the lens and imaged onto a detector (e.g., a CCD camera) while the reflected light from the background is filtered out by the lens aperture and/or by additional customized frequency filters

Script Organization

```
[ Definition of variables, e.g., wavelength, angle of incidence, material n&k, etc... ]  
foreach CASE {1 2 3} {  
  foreach POL {S P} {  
    [ Part 1: FDTD simulation of wafer near field ]  
    [ Part 2: Calculation of far-field spectrum of the reflected field ]  
    [ Part 3: Imaging the reflected field thru a lens, a filter and a polarizer ]  
  }  
}
```

□ The simulations are run inside two nested loops in the script

- Outer loop over wafer patterns:
 - Case 1: a defect-free line/space wafer pattern
 - Case 2: a void in a metal line (open circuit)
 - Case 3: a defect in between metal lines (short circuit)
- Inner loop over incident field polarizations: s- and p-polarization



Script Organization (cont'd)

- ❑ In the script, variables are heavily used to parameterize the simulation conditions. For example, the command for FDTD grid setup is written as

```
emxp::grid lx=$LX ly=$LY lz=$LZ nx=$NX ny=$NY nz=$NZ n0=1 k0=0
```

where LX, LY, LZ, etc..., in red are variables defined at the beginning of the script. The “\$” sign indicates they need to be substituted with actual values at the run time.

- ❑ Parameterization is very useful in writing a script that can be easily adapted for different conditions, particularly when it comes to looping and geometry creation.
- ❑ For the sake of clarity, we will substitute the variables with the actual values assigned to them when we explain each of the commands in this tutorial. In fact, this is also the process taking place when the script is executed by the program. So the above command becomes as follows.

```
emxp::grid lx=3.0 ly=3.0 lz=0.8 nx=75 ny=75 nz=20 n0=1 k0=0
```

- ❑ Sometimes the user may encounter some special characters in the script.
 - Lines starting with “#” sign are comments and are ignored by the program
 - Lines ending with “\” indicates the command is not yet complete and continues to the next line

How to run the script

- ❑ To run the script, type the following command in Windows shell

```
"C:\EM Explorer\EM Explorer Studio\bin\emxp.exe" dark_field_defect_inspection.emx
```

- The first item in quote is the full filename path to the EM Explorer Console executable (emxp.exe).
 - The above assumes that the user has installed the package in the default directory. If not, it needs to be substituted with the actual path.
 - The second item is the script filename (dark_field_defect_inspect.emx)
- ❑ The user can place the above command in a .bat file (e.g., runemx.bat) and then executes the command by simply double-clicking the .bat file.

Part 1

FDTD simulation of wafer near field

- Step 1: Setup FDTD Grid
- Step 2: Setup FDTD Geometry
- Step 3: Setup FDTD Excitation
- Step 4: Setup FDTD Boundary Condition
- Step 5: Setup FDTD Convergence Monitor
- Step 6: Run FDTD Solver
- Step 7: Output FDTD Data

Step 1: Setup FDTD Grid

❑ Command

```
emxp::grid lx=3.0 ly=3.0 lz=0.8 nx=75 ny=75 nz=20 n0=1 k0=0
```

❑ Explanation

- `emxp::grid` is the command name for FDTD grid specification
- `lx`, `ly` and `lz` are FDTD simulation domain sizes in x, y and z directions respectively.
 - Note all length units in this example are in μm .
- `nx`, `ny` and `nz` are number of Yee cells in x, y and z directions respectively
 - Note, in this example, $lx/nx = ly/ny = lz/nz = 0.04\mu\text{m}$, which is the Yee cell size.
 - For tutorial purpose, a relatively large Yee cell size ($\sim 1/9$ of the wavelength = $0.364\mu\text{m}$, see excitation setup) is used so that the simulation can run quickly. For better accuracy, $< 1/15$ of wavelength is generally recommended.
 - It is also recommended to have approximately the same Yee cell size in all three (x, y, z) directions to minimize numerical dispersion.
- `n0` and `k0` are the real and imaginary part of the complex refractive index of the ambient material, which is air in this example.

Step 2: Setup FDTD Geometry

□ Commands

```
# Si Substrate of 0.09um in thickness
emxp::solid shape=box xc=1.5 yc=1.5 zc=0.755 xw=3.0 yw=3.0 zw=0.09 n=6.472 k=2.944
# Oxide Film of 0.23um in thickness
emxp::solid shape=box xc=1.5 yc=1.5 zc=0.595 xw=3.0 yw=3.0 zw=0.23 n=1.563 k=0.0
# Five metal (Cu) lines of 0.2um in thickness, 0.2um in width and 0.6um in pitch
emxp::solid shape=box xc=0.3 yc=1.5 zc=0.38 xw=0.2 yw=3.0 zw=0.2 n=1.47 k=2.05
emxp::solid shape=box xc=0.9 yc=1.5 zc=0.38 xw=0.2 yw=3.0 zw=0.2 n=1.47 k=2.05
emxp::solid shape=box xc=1.5 yc=1.5 zc=0.38 xw=0.2 yw=3.0 zw=0.2 n=1.47 k=2.05
emxp::solid shape=box xc=2.1 yc=1.5 zc=0.38 xw=0.2 yw=3.0 zw=0.2 n=1.47 k=2.05
emxp::solid shape=box xc=2.7 yc=1.5 zc=0.38 xw=0.2 yw=3.0 zw=0.2 n=1.47 k=2.05
# A defect between metal lines
emxp::solid shape=box xc=1.3 yc=1.5 zc=0.38 xw=0.2 yw=0.2 zw=0.2 n=1.47 k=2.05
```

□ Explanation

- `emxp::solid` is the command name for FDTD geometry setup
 - One solid command adds one geometry primitive to the FDTD simulation domain
 - Multiple solid commands can be used set up a complex geometry. Overlapping solids are allowed, a solid added later will overwrite earlier solids in the overlapping volume.
 - The above setup is for case 3 (see Fig.2). Other cases are done similarly.
- `shape` specifies the primitive shape. In addition to box, other options such as ellipsoid, cylinder and frustum are also available.
- `xc`, `yc` and `zc` are the center coordinates of the solid's bounding box
- `xw`, `yw` and `zw` are the sides of the solid's bounding box
- `n` and `k` are the real and imaginary part of the complex refractive index of the solid

Step 3: Setup FDTD Excitation

□ Command

```
emxp::planewave2 wavelength=0.364 z_source=0.2 es_amp=0.0 ep_amp=1.0 theta=50 phi=0
```

□ Explanation

- `emxp::planewave2` is the command name to set up a planewave excitation.
 - There is also `emxp::planewave` command which specifies a planewave in a different way.
- `wavelength` is the planewave wavelength in vacuum.
- `z_source` specifies the z location of the excitation source plane. The source plane is perpendicular to z axis.
 - Total field / scattered field method is used to model the planewave source. The source plane divides the simulation domain into a total field region ($z > z_source$) and a reflected field region ($z < z_source$).
- `es_amp` (`ep_amp`) is the amplitude of the s-polarization (p-polarization) component of the incident electric field
 - s-polarization component ***Es*** is perpendicular to the plane of incidence
 - p-polarization component ***Ep*** is parallel to the plane of incidence
 - Note ***Es***, ***Ep*** and wavevector ***K*** are orthogonal to each other (see Fig.2)
 - The above example specifies a p-polarized incident field.
- `theta` and `phi` are the angles to specify the planewave wavevector ***K*** in degree.
 - `phi` is the angle between the plane of incidence and x-z plane
 - `theta` is the angle between the wavevector ***K*** and z axis
 - In this example, the plane of incidence coincides with x-z plane and ***K*** is 50° from normal

Step 4: FDTD Boundary Condition

□ Command

```
emxp::pml2
```

□ Explanation

- EM Explorer assumes the following boundary conditions
 - Periodic boundary condition (PBC) in x and y
 - Absorbing boundary condition (ABC) in z. Sometimes this is also called open BC.
- The following methods are available in EM Explorer to model the ABC
 - Analytical ABC
 - PML (Perfectly Matching Layer) ABC
 - PML2 ABC, which is an enhanced version of PML.
- We use pml2 in this example

Step 5: FDTD Convergence Monitor

□ Command

```
emxp::convergence i=0 j=0 k=0 sample_size=10 samples_per_cycle=1 tolerance=0.00
```

□ Explanation

- The convergence monitor checks the electric field amplitude at a user-specified location to see if it reaches steady state based on user-specified criterion.
- `i`, `j`, and `k` are the indices of the Yee cell where the field is monitored.
 - In this example, it monitors the (0,0,0) cell for the reflected field (recall that at this location $z < z_{\text{source}}$)
- `samples_per_cycle` is the frequency at which the data will be collected.
 - In this example, the reflected field will be sampled once every wave cycle.
- `sample_size` is the number of data points on which the maximum and minimum values of data are calculated. The calculation is done on the most recent data collected.
 - In this example, the last 10 data points collected will be used to compute the max and min values.
- `tolerance` is the user-specified steady state criterion.
 - If $\text{tolerance} < \text{max-min}$, then the steady state is reached and the FDTD solver stops running.
 - If the condition is not met, the FDTD solver will continue to run until the maximum number of cycles specified by the user is reached (see step 6 for details). In this example, since $\text{tolerance}=0.0$, the solver will run to the max cycles.

Step 6: Run FDTD Solver

❑ Command

```
emxp::run n_cycles=20
```

❑ Explanation

- `emxp::run` command runs the FDTD solver to propagate the electromagnetic field through the simulation domain. It solves the Maxwell's equations using a field marching algorithm in time domain.
- `n_cycles` specifies the maximum number of wave cycles that the above process to run.
 - One wave cycle means the monoharmonic field oscillates one period in time or travels one wavelength in space.
 - The FDTD solver stops when `n_cycles` is reached or when the convergence criterion is met (see step 5)
- Note
 - Meshing is also done in this step if it is not done yet.
 - This command can be called repeatedly to continue the field propagation. The user can output intermediate results (see step 7) if needed between the run commands.
- Below is an example screen output when this command is called

```
emxp> emxp::run n_cycles=20
Building Mesh: 0%----10%----20%----30%----40%----50%----60%----70%----80%----90%----100%
Cycle=      1.00 Ex=   0.01903 -2.62860 Ey=   0.00000   2.30684 Ez=   0.02403   2.74025
Cycle=      2.00 Ex=   0.02457   1.50301 Ey=   0.00000  -1.25017 Ez=   0.02938   2.39990
Cycle=      3.00 Ex=   0.11084   0.88072 Ey=   0.00000   2.54462 Ez=   0.12835   0.22910
... ..
```

Step 7: Output FDTD Results

□ Command

```
emxp::output property=intensity imin=0 imax=75 jmin=0 jmax=75 kmin=0 kmax=0 \  
file=intensity_nearfield_z0_Case3_P_0.04.vtk
```

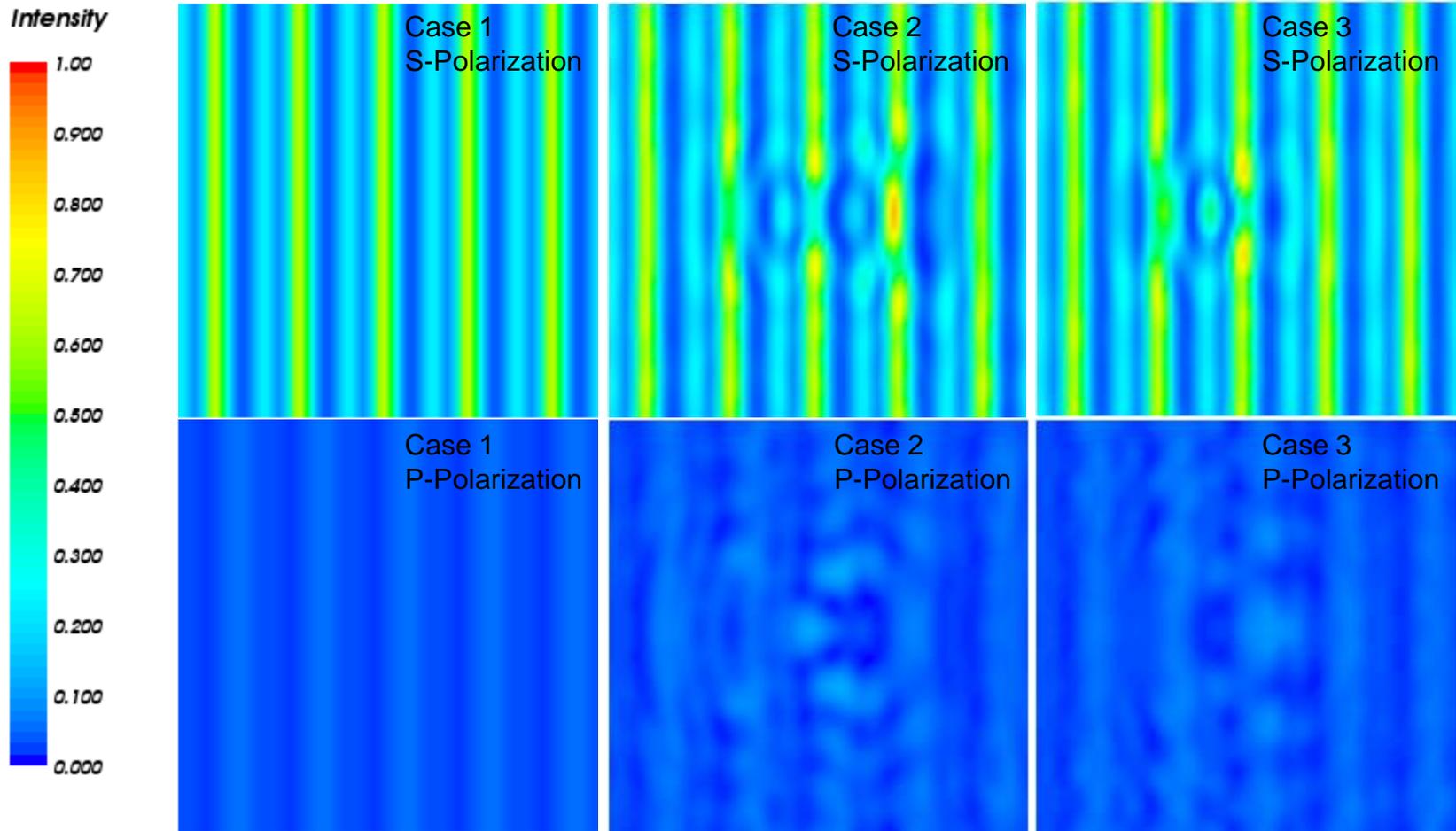
□ Explanation

- `emxp::output` command is used to save FDTD result to a file.
- `property` specifies what to output. It can save complex E- and H-field, intensity, Poynting vector, complex permittivity and permeability throughout the simulation domain.
 - In this example, we save e-field intensity
- `imin, imax, jmin, jmax, kmin, kmax` specify a spatial range of Yee cells of which the data to be saved.
 - In this example, we save the intensity distribution in the plane at $z=0$, which is part of the reflected field.
- `file` is the filename to which the data is saved.
 - It is in standard VTK format. Therefore any VTK-compatible data visualizers (e.g., MayaVi, ParaView, etc...) can be used to view the data.
 - It is also in text format, which allows the user to easily import to his/her own applications to extract the information

Example FDTD Near Field Results

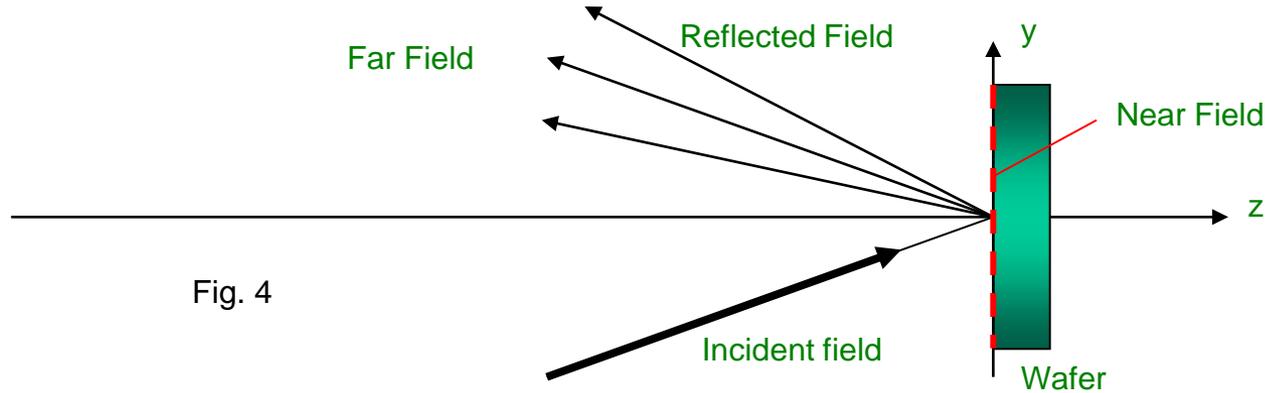
□ Reflected Field Intensity Distribution at $z = 0$

Fig.3



Part 2

Calculation of far-field spectrum of the reflected field in free space



- Step 1: Setup Near Field
- Step 2: Propagate to Far Field

Step 1: Setup Near Field

□ Command

```
emxp::nearfield object=FDTD k=0
```

□ Explanation

- `emxp::nearfield` command is used to setup the near field of the simulation engine
- `object` specifies where the near field comes from
 - In this example, it comes from the FDTD simulation engine
 - Other options are also available, such as from external data files
- `k` specifies the z index of the plane location in which the FDTD near field is sampled.
 - In this example, the reflected field at $z=0$ is sampled (recall that $z=0 < z_{\text{source}}$, which is in the reflected field region)

Step 2: Propagate to Far Field

□ Command

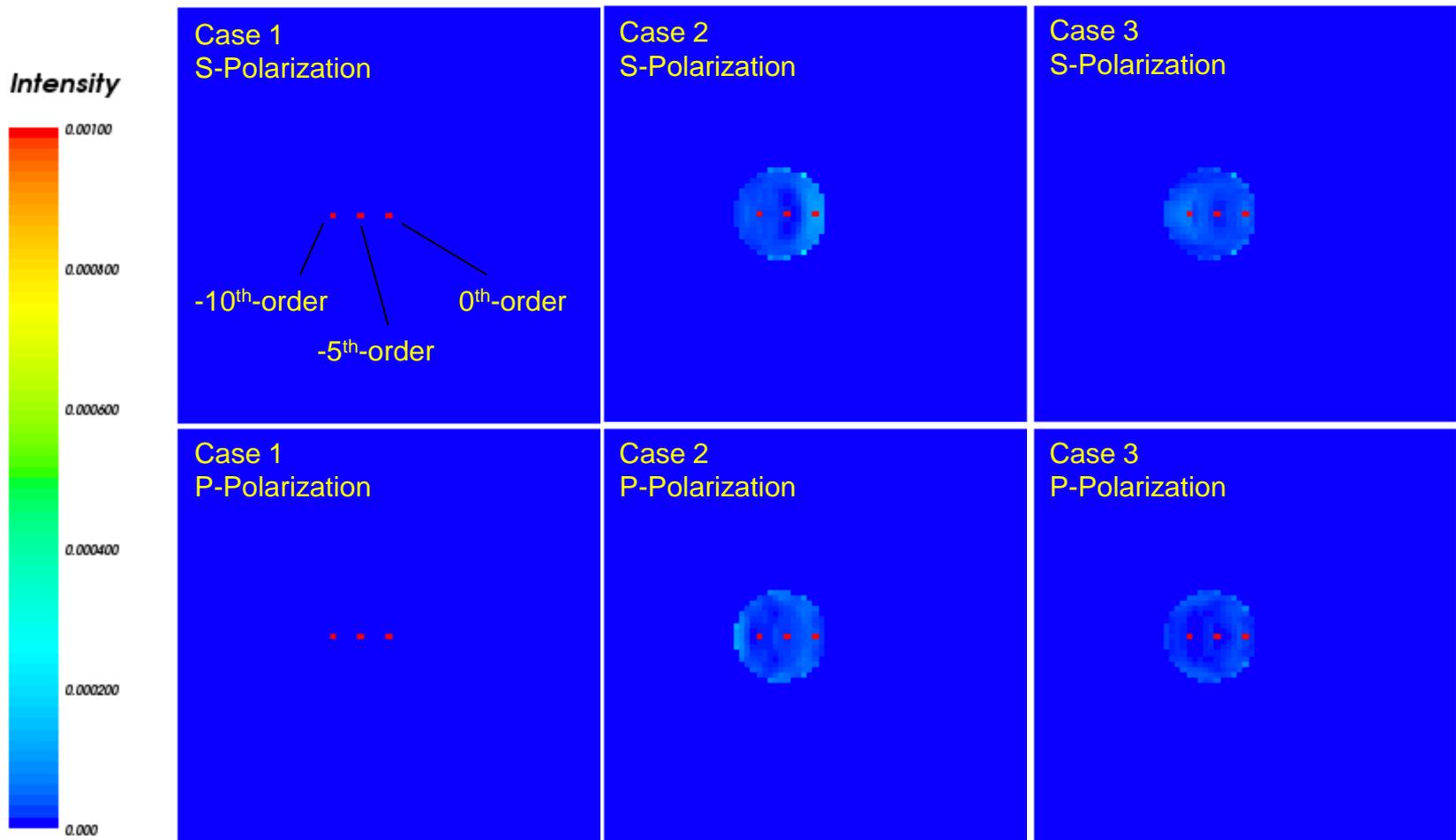
```
emxp::propagate medium=freespace distance=1000.0 \  
                output=ft_intensity_Case3_P_0.04.vtk property=ft_intensity
```

□ Explanation

- `emxp::propagate` command propagates the near field to far field
- `medium` specifies the object through which the field propagates
 - In this example, it is just an open space
 - Other options are also available, such as lens, filters, etc...
- `distance` specifies the distance over which the field propagates.
 - In this example, this distance is 1mm, large enough (compared to the wavelength) for the evanescent waves to die out.
- `output` specifies a filename to save results
- `property` specifies what to save. In this example, the property is the intensity of the Fourier transform of the far field as indicated by “ft_intensity”, which is also called the spectrum or diffraction orders of the scattered field.

Example Spectrum Results

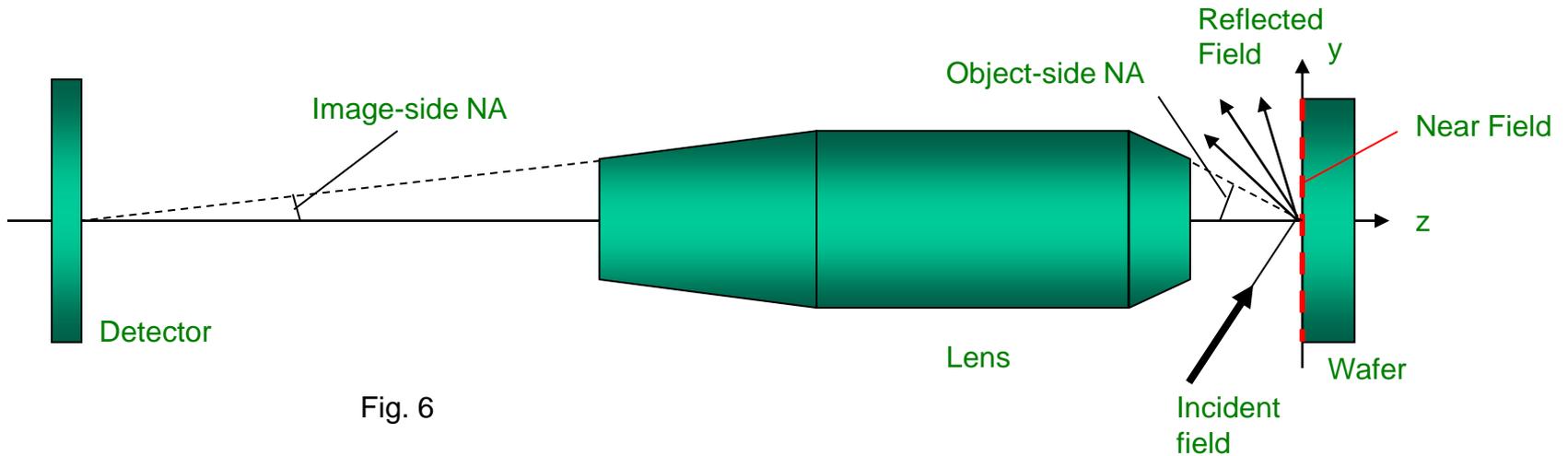
Fig. 5



- Note, a small color scale is used in the above plots in order to show the diffraction orders of the defects. The background scattering by the metal lines (0th, -5th, and -10th orders as shown in Case 1) is much stronger and saturated in color.

Part 3

Imaging of near field onto detector through lens, filter & polarizer



- ❑ Step 1: Setup Near Field
- ❑ Step 2: Create Optical Elements (lens, filter, etc...)
- ❑ Step 3: Propagate to Detector through Optical Elements

Step 1: Setup Near Field

❑ Command

```
emxp::nearfield object=FDTD k=0
```

❑ Explanation

- `emxp::nearfield` command is used to setup the near field of the simulation engine
- `object` specifies where the near field comes from
 - In this example, it comes from the FDTD simulation engine
 - Other options are also available, such as from external data files
- `k` specifies the z index of the plane location in which the FDTD near field is sampled.
 - In this example, the reflected field at $z=0$ is sampled (recall that $z=0 < z_{\text{source}}$, which is in the reflected field region)

Step 2: Create Optical Elements (1)

❑ Command for creating a lens

```
emxp::lens mag=100.0 n_obj=1.0 n_img=1.0 na=0.005
```

❑ Explanation

- `emxp::lens` command creates an optical lens element in EM Explorer
- `mag` specifies the magnification of the lens
 - Note a large magnification (100x) is used in this example
- `n_obj` is the refractive index of the medium in the object space
- `n_img` is the refractive index of the medium in the image space
- `na` specifies the Numerical Aperture (NA) of the lens on the image side.
 - The NA on the object side is $na_{obj} = na * mag$
 - Note in this example, the image-side NA is very small ($na=0.005$), therefore all light rays in the image space are nearly parallel to the optical axis
 - In the object space, $na_{obj} = 0.5$ ($< n_{obj} * \sin(50^\circ)$), therefore 0th-order scattered light produced by the background metal lines will be filtered out by the lens (see Fig.5). This is a typical setup of dark-field imaging for defect detection.

Step 2: Create Optical Elements (2)

□ Command for creating a spatial frequency filter

```
# Specify the background transmission of the filter
emxp::freq_filter name=filter1 property=background trans=1.0
# Specify transmission of diffraction orders
emxp::freq_filter name=filter1 property=diffraction_order m= -5 n=0 trans=0.0
emxp::freq_filter name=filter1 property=diffraction_order m=-10 n=0 trans=0.0
```

□ Explanation

- `emxp::freq_filter` command creates a new spatial frequency filter or sets the property of an existing one
- `name` is the reference to the filter. Multiple filters can be created using different names.
- `property` specifies what property to set by the command - background or diffraction order
- `m` & `n` are the x & y indices to a diffraction order of the field
- `trans` specifies the transmission of the background or the diffraction order
- Note, in this example, the system is designed to filter out 3 diffraction orders of the reflected field. These are the main diffraction orders (0th, -5th, -10th orders) produced by the background metal lines (see Part 2 simulation results). Note, the 0th-order is already filtered out by the previous lens aperture. The -5th and -10th orders are filtered by this filter.

Step 2: Create Optical Elements (3)

❑ Command for creating a polarizer

```
emxp::polarizer name=polarizer1 type=linear angle=45.0
```

❑ Explanation

- `emxp::polarizer` command creates a polarizer in EM Explorer
- `name` is the reference to the polarizer. Multiple polarizers can be created using different names.
- `type` specifies the polarizer type. In this example, it is a linear polarizer. Circular polarizer is also available in EM Explorer.
- `angle` specifies polarization direction of the polarizer.
- Note, the polarizer created in this example is rather arbitrary. The main purpose is to demonstrate its usage model.

Step 3: Propagate thru Optical Elements

□ Commands

```
# Propagate the field through the lens
emxp::propagate medium=lens defocus=0.0 \
    output=intensity_lens_Case3_P_0.04.vtk property=intensity

# Apply the filter to the field
emxp::propagate medium=filter1 \
    output=intensity_filter_Case3_P_0.04.vtk property=intensity

# Apply the polarizer to the field
emxp::propagate medium=polarizer1 \
    output=intensity_polarizer_Case3_P_0.04.vtk property=intensity
```

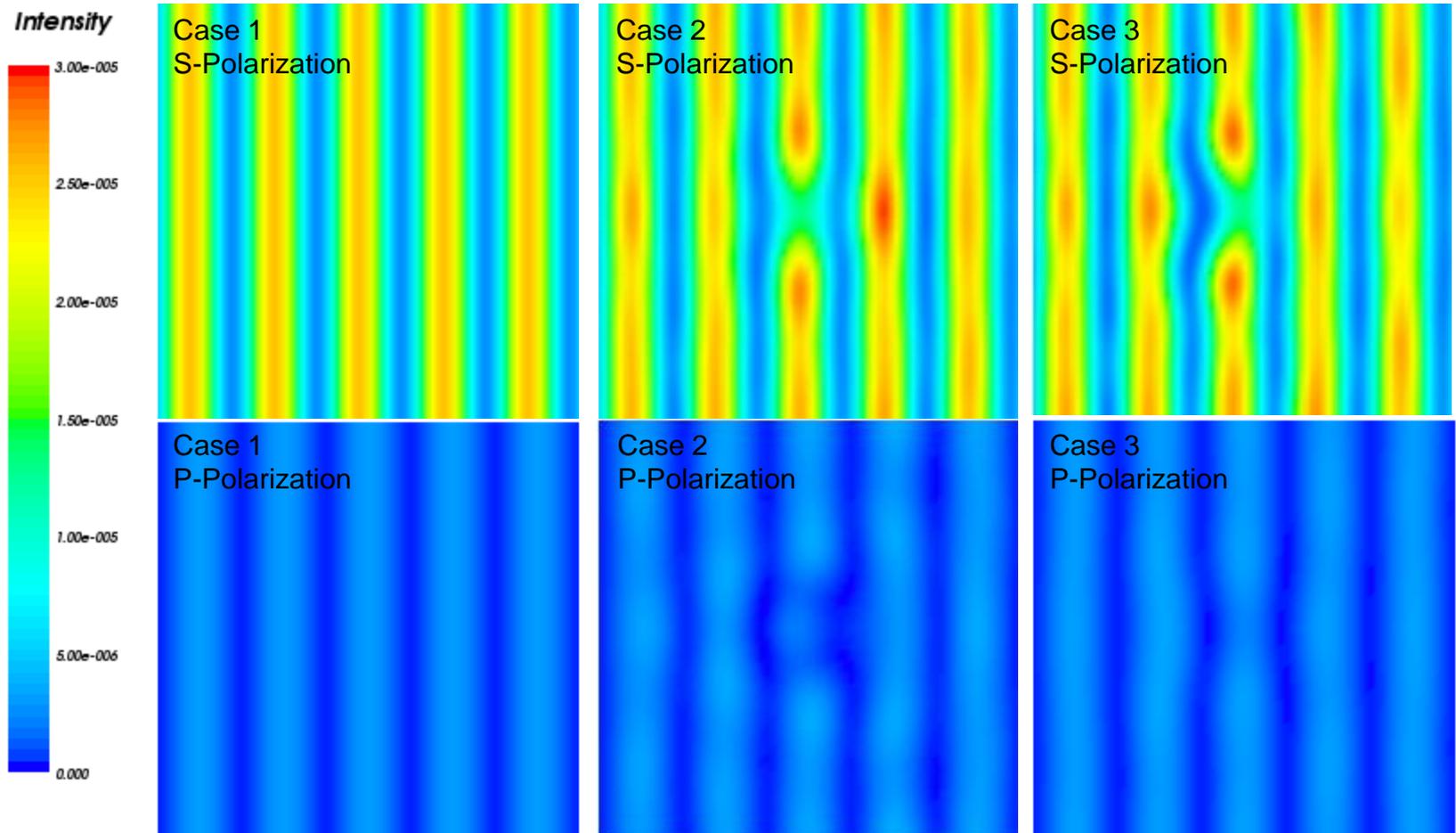
□ Explanation

- The above commands are quite self-explanatory.
- By cascading the propagate commands, the field is modified by the optical elements in series.

Example Defect Images at the Detector

Fig. 7

- Images through lens only (no filter or polarizer)

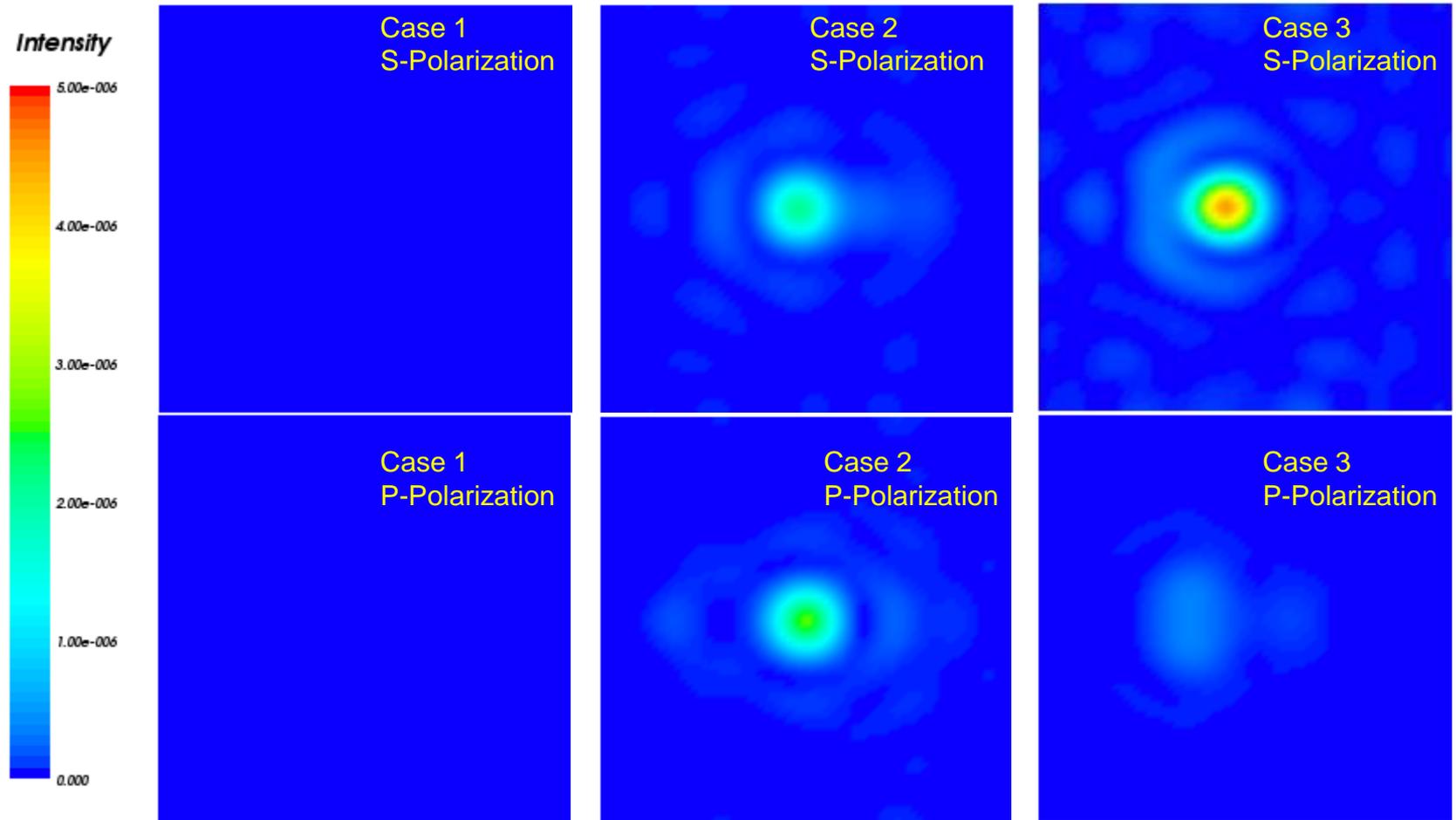


- Note the small color scale due to the intensity dilution from the 100x magnification lens
- It's not easy to distinguish between Case 2 defect and Case 3 defect at the detector

Example Defect Images at the Detector

Fig. 8

□ Images through lens and filter (no polarizer)



□ Note the defect image intensity is strongly dependent on the polarization in Case 3 defect, which can be used to distinguish it from Case 2 defect.

Thank You