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(54) **DISCHARGE DEVICE HAVING A SHORT-CIRCUITING ELEMENT, AND DISCHARGE METHOD**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A discharge device for discharging a plurality of battery cells having an unknown state-of charge is disclosed. The discharge device includes a contact-connection element for the electrical contact-connection of respective battery cells in the plurality of battery cells, and a short-circuiting element. The contact-connection element includes, for each individual battery cell in the plurality of battery cells, an electrical contact having a non-return device. Each of the non-return devices is configured to prevent any return flow of electricity from the respective battery cells, via the contact-connection element, into a battery cell which is assigned to the respective non-return device such that electricity is removed in a unidirectional manner from the respective battery cell. Respective electrical contacts of the contact-connection element are electrically coupled in the direction of flow of electricity, down-circuit of the respective non-return devices. The short-circuiting element is configured to short-circuit the plurality of battery cells.