

A.M. Samarasinghe and N.W. Herath  
*National Building Research Organisation*

Vertical lateritic soil profiles encountered in carrying out several soil investigations are discussed in order to highlight the occurrence of different lateritic layers that fall into different types of soil classification. The significance of nonhomogeneity of lateritic soil profiles from a soil mechanics point of view is presented. Some geologic and weathering aspects that contribute towards such nonhomogeneity of laterites are also pointed out. Engineering usage of lateritic soils as road subgrade, subbase and base course material, filling in land reclamation etc. is governed, in addition to basic physical property tests, by Standard Compaction tests and CBR tests. Salient engineering characteristics of local laterites when subjected to above tests are discussed. Some shear strength test results of lateritic soils are also presented. The test results are compared with results obtained from laterites outside Sri Lanka. Various specifications used for lateritic soils are also mentioned.