

# MATRIC SUCTION CHARACTERISTICS OF UNSATURATED RESIDUAL SOILS OF SRI LANKA

*This thesis was submitted to the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Moratuwa in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of M. Eng. in Geotechnical Engineering*



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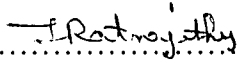
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## DECLARATION

The work included in the thesis in part or whole, has not been submitted for any other academic qualification at any institution.

  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Residual soils from selected prominent landslide sites of the upcountry of Sri Lanka are tested under unsaturated conditions to evaluate pertinent unsaturated properties of the soils. The selected landslide sites are Naketiya, Kahagalla, Walhaputenna and Beragala.

The tri-axial test apparatus was modified by using high air-entry disks so that pore-air pressures and pore-water pressures of a soil sample could be maintained at separate, required magnitude. Soil samples obtained from Dambulla International Stadium site were used to verify the repeatability of the test results by the modified apparatus, and the reliability of the apparatus.

Soil samples obtained from each of the selected landslides sites were prepared at the maximum dry density and optimum moisture content as determined by the proctor compaction test. These were tested in triaxial conditions under five different matric suction (which is the difference between pore-air and pore-water pressure) magnitudes. Time was allowed for each sample to reach an equilibrium state under the particular matric suction applied, before triaxial testing commenced. The test results are used to develop the shear strength function for each soil tested, and the soil-water characteristic curve (SWCC) for each soil over the range of matric suction (30 kPa – 200 kPa) considered in the investigation.

These results are of importance in interpreting the variation of shear strength with the moisture content for these residual soils, which will have a direct bearing on stability of slopes there.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is my great pleasure to express the gratitude and acknowledgement to my project supervisor Dr. U.G.A. Puswewala for his guidance and supervision extended to make this project a success.

Also I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. S.A.S. Kulathilaka for his guidance and encouragement given to initiate this project.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. T. A. Peiris who was instrumental in modifying the existing laboratory tri-axial apparatus.

I express my profound thanks to Mr. K.R. Pitipanarachchi who was actively involved in developing and ensuring the modified tri-axial apparatus. Also I would like to thank Mr. D.G.S. Vithanage and Mr. D. Bandulasena for their support and assistance in carrying out tests at the laboratory.

I like to convey my gratitude to Mr.H.A.S.Chandrapala, Microscopy Laboratory for his kind assistance in carrying out DTA tests and Mr. M.G.S.K. Silva, Polymer Laboratory for his kind assistance in carrying out modulus test of the membranes.

My sincere thanks are due to Mr.P.Ariyaratne, Material Engineer, Road Development Authority for the collection of soil samples for this project.

I would like to thank Mr. K. Sivakumar, System Analyst, Informatics (Pvt) Ltd for developing for me a simple programme to carry out the graphical analysis easily.

I also thank Miss. S.D.P.K. Peiris for her assistance in preparing this document.

I express my grateful thanks to the University of Moratuwa for providing the financial support for this project.

Further I would like to extend my gratitude to the higher management of the Road Development Authority for granting me leave in order to complete this project.

Finally I extend my profound thanks to all those who had a hand either directly or indirectly for the successful completion of this project.

Thevaki Ratnajothy  
August 2001

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