

# SYMBOLS AND TERMS USED ON BOREHOLE AND TEST PIT RECORDS

## SOIL DESCRIPTION

### Terminology describing common soil genesis:

<i>Topsoil</i>	- mixture of soil and humus capable of supporting vegetative growth
<i>Peat</i>	- mixture of visible and invisible fragments of decayed organic matter
<i>Till</i>	- unstratified glacial deposit which may range from clay to boulders
<i>Fill</i>	- material below the surface identified as placed by humans (excluding buried services)

### Terminology describing soil structure:

<i>Desiccated</i>	- having visible signs of weathering by oxidization of clay minerals, shrinkage cracks, etc.
<i>Fissured</i>	- having cracks, and hence a blocky structure
<i>Varved</i>	- composed of regular alternating layers of silt and clay
<i>Stratified</i>	- composed of alternating successions of different soil types, e.g. silt and sand
<i>Layer</i>	- > 75 mm in thickness
<i>Seam</i>	- 2 mm to 75 mm in thickness
<i>Parting</i>	- < 2 mm in thickness

### Terminology describing soil types:

The classification of soil types are made on the basis of grain size and plasticity in accordance with the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS) (ASTM D 2487 or D 2488). The classification excludes particles larger than 76 mm (3 inches). The USCS provides a group symbol (e.g. SM) and group name (e.g. silty sand) for identification.

### Terminology describing cobbles, boulders, and non-matrix materials (organic matter or debris):

Terminology describing materials outside the USCS, (e.g. particles larger than 76 mm, visible organic matter, construction debris) is based upon the proportion of these materials present:

<i>Trace, or occasional</i>	Less than 10%
<i>Some</i>	10-20%
<i>Frequent</i>	> 20%

### Terminology describing compactness of cohesionless soils:

The standard terminology to describe cohesionless soils includes compactness (formerly "relative density"), as determined by the Standard Penetration Test N-Value (also known as N-Index). A relationship between compactness condition and N-Value is shown in the following table.

Compactness Condition	SPT N-Value
<i>Very Loose</i>	<4
<i>Loose</i>	4-10
<i>Compact</i>	10-30
<i>Dense</i>	30-50
<i>Very Dense</i>	>50

### Terminology describing consistency of cohesive soils:

The standard terminology to describe cohesive soils includes the consistency, which is based on undrained shear strength as measured by *in situ* vane tests, penetrometer tests, or unconfined compression tests.

Consistency	Undrained Shear Strength	
	kips/sq.ft.	kPa
<i>Very Soft</i>	<0.25	<12.5
<i>Soft</i>	0.25 - 0.5	12.5 - 25
<i>Firm</i>	0.5 - 1.0	25 - 50
<i>Stiff</i>	1.0 - 2.0	50 - 100
<i>Very Stiff</i>	2.0 - 4.0	100 - 200
<i>Hard</i>	>4.0	>200

## ROCK DESCRIPTION

### Terminology describing rock quality:

RQD	Rock Mass Quality
0-25	<i>Very Poor</i>
25-50	<i>Poor</i>
50-75	<i>Fair</i>
75-90	<i>Good</i>
90-100	<i>Excellent</i>

Rock quality classification is based on a modified core recovery percentage (RQD) in which all pieces of sound core over 100 mm long are counted as recovery. The smaller pieces are considered to be due to close shearing, jointing, faulting, or weathering in the rock mass and are not counted. RQD was originally intended to be done on NW core; however, it can be used on different core sizes if the bulk of the fractures caused by drilling stresses are easily distinguishable from *in situ* fractures. The terminology describing rock mass quality based on RQD is subjective and is underlain by the presumption that sound strong rock is of higher engineering value than fractured weak rock.

### Terminology describing rock mass:

Spacing (mm)	Joint Classification	Bedding, Laminations, Bands
> 6000	<i>Extremely Wide</i>	-
2000-6000	<i>Very Wide</i>	<i>Very Thick</i>
600-2000	<i>Wide</i>	<i>Thick</i>
200-600	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Medium</i>
60-200	<i>Close</i>	<i>Thin</i>
20-60	<i>Very Close</i>	<i>Very Thin</i>
<20	<i>Extremely Close</i>	<i>Laminated</i>
<6	-	<i>Thinly Laminated</i>

### Terminology describing rock strength:

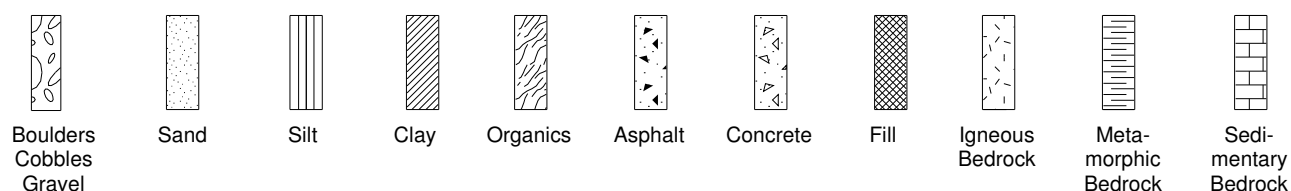
Strength Classification	Unconfined Compressive Strength (MPa)
<i>Extremely Weak</i>	< 1
<i>Very Weak</i>	1 – 5
<i>Weak</i>	5 – 25
<i>Medium Strong</i>	25 – 50
<i>Strong</i>	50 – 100
<i>Very Strong</i>	100 – 250
<i>Extremely Strong</i>	> 250

### Terminology describing rock weathering:

Term	Description
<i>Fresh</i>	No visible signs of rock weathering. Slight discolouration along major discontinuities
<i>Slightly Weathered</i>	Discolouration indicates weathering of rock on discontinuity surfaces. All the rock material may be discoloured.
<i>Moderately Weathered</i>	Less than half the rock is decomposed and/or disintegrated into soil.
<i>Highly Weathered</i>	More than half the rock is decomposed and/or disintegrated into soil.
<i>Completely Weathered</i>	All the rock material is decomposed and/or disintegrated into soil. The original mass structure is still largely intact.

## STRATA PLOT

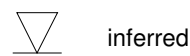
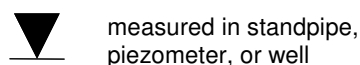
Strata plots symbolize the soil or bedrock description. They are combinations of the following basic symbols. The dimensions within the strata symbols are not indicative of the particle size, layer thickness, etc.



## SAMPLE TYPE

SS	Split spoon sample (obtained by performing the Standard Penetration Test)
ST	Shelby tube or thin wall tube
PS	Piston sample
BS	Bulk sample
WS	Wash sample
HQ, NQ, BQ, etc.	Rock core samples obtained with the use of standard size diamond coring bits.

## WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENT



## RECOVERY

For soil samples, the recovery is recorded as the length of the soil sample recovered. For rock core, recovery is defined as the total cumulative length of all core recovered in the core barrel divided by the length drilled and is recorded as a percentage on a per run basis.

## N-VALUE / RQD

Numbers in this column are the field results of the Standard Penetration Test: the number of blows of a 140 pound (64 kg) hammer falling 30 inches (760 mm), required to drive a 2 inch (50.8 mm) O.D. split spoon sampler one foot (305 mm) into the soil. For split spoon samples where insufficient penetration was achieved and N-values cannot be presented, the number of blows are reported over sampler penetration in millimetres (e.g. 50/75). Some design methods make use of N value corrected for various factors such as overburden pressure, energy ratio, borehole diameter, etc. No corrections have been applied to the N-values presented on the log. RQD is based on a modified core recovery percentage in which all pieces of sound core over 100 mm long are counted as recovery.

## DYNAMIC CONE PENETRATION TEST (DCPT)

Dynamic cone penetration tests are performed using a standard 60 degree apex cone connected to A size drill rods with the same standard fall height and weight as the Standard Penetration Test. The DCPT value is the number of blows of the hammer required to drive the cone one foot (305 mm) into the soil. The DCPT is used as a probe to assess soil variability. Soil type may be inferred from adjacent boreholes and test pits.

## OTHER TESTS

S	Sieve analysis
H	Hydrometer analysis
k	Laboratory permeability
$\gamma$	Unit weight
$G_s$	Specific gravity of soil particles
CD	Consolidated drained triaxial
CU	Consolidated undrained triaxial with pore pressure measurements
UU	Unconsolidated undrained triaxial
DS	Direct Shear
C	Consolidation
$Q_u$	Unconfined compression
$I_p$	Point Load Index ( $I_p$ on Borehole Record equals $I_p(50)$ in which the index is corrected to a reference diameter of 50 mm)

	Single packer permeability test; test interval from depth shown to bottom of borehole
	Double packer permeability test; test interval as indicated
	Falling head permeability test using casing
	Falling head permeability test using well point or piezometer