

## Press Release

### Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited

February 08, 2021

### Rating Reaffirmed



<b>Total Facilities Rated*</b>	<b>Rs. 1250.00 Cr.</b>
<b>Facilities Rated</b>	Rs. 800.00 Cr.
<b>Long Term Rating</b>	ACUITE A+/ Stable (Reaffirmed)
<b>Total Commercial Paper Rated</b>	Rs. 450.00 Cr.
<b>Short Term Rating</b>	ACUITE A1+ (Reaffirmed)

\* Refer Annexure for details

### Rating Rationale

Acuite has reaffirmed the long term rating of '**ACUITE A+**' (read as **ACUITE A plus**) and the short term rating of '**ACUITE A1+**' (read as **ACUITE A one plus**) on the Rs.1250.00 Cr. of Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited (TIAPL). The outlook is '**Stable**'.

The rating factors in demonstrated track record of operations, its competitive position in the domestic debt capital market and established relationships with marquee clients and investors. Acuite Believes that group is well positioned and have strong platform to benefit from the expected buoyancy in the bond market on the back of the announcement made in union budget of 2021 of setting up the institutional framework for better liquidity in the secondary bond market. The strengths are partially offset by susceptibility of revenue to volatility in capital market and credit acceptance of market in terms of structures of the debt instruments.

Acuite has also taken a note of the group's recent venture into the mutual fund industry. The group has launched its debt fund which focuses on debt instruments of banks, public sector undertakings, public financial institutions and municipal bonds. Group's foray into the fund business synergizes well the current product offerings and further diversifies its business profile.

#### Analytical approach:

Acuite has taken a Consolidated view on TCSPL and its subsidiaries, namely, Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited, Trust Securities Services Private Limited, Sankhya Financial Services Private Limited, Trust Asset Management Private Limited, Chanakya Capital Partners and Trust AMC Trustee Private Limited collectively referred to as 'Trust group'. This is because of the common promoters, shared brand name, significant operational and financial synergies between the companies. Extent of consolidation: full.

#### About Trust Group and the TIAPL:

Mumbai based, Trust Group is promoted by Ms. Nipa Sheth who has over two decades of experience in the financial services industry. The Group has transitioned from a boutique investment banking firm in 2001 to a diversified financial services provider merchant banking, wealth management services, portfolio management services, and non-banking financial operations, and has now ventured into domestic asset management by successfully launching New Fund Offer (NFO).

The holding company of the group has two direct and four indirect subsidiaries, namely, Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited (merchant banking arm), Trust Securities Services Private Limited (Broking services), Sankhya Financial Services Private Limited (NBFC), Trust Asset Management Private Limited (AMC), Chanakya Corporate Partners (a Mauritius based broking/advisory firm) and Trust AMC Trustee Private Limited.

Trust investment advisors Private Limited (TIAPL) was incorporated in 2006. TIAPL is a merchant banking arm of trust group and is registered under SEBI as a category 1 merchant banker along with a portfolio manager effective from October 2016. The company obtained its permanent merchant banking certificate in March 2017. TIAPL is one of the sustained leading non-bank arrangers in commercial paper segment along with bond markets. The company has established its leadership and expertise in the segment by being an arranger to innovative transactions namely Commercial

Mortgage backed securities, Climate and sustainable energy bonds, BASEL III bonds, credit enhanced state government bonds to name a few.

### **Key Rating Drivers:**

#### **Strengths:**

- **Long operational track record coupled with competitive position in domestic capital market:**

The Trust group has presence in merchant banking, wealth management, advisory business, and portfolio management services. The group offers a wide array of financial services to domestic and overseas clients. Trust group has recently made a foray into overseas markets through Chanakya Capital Partners which is the advisory arm of the group catering to international clients. The group has been able to fortify its presence in both capital markets with its strong sourcing, structuring, underwriting, and distribution capabilities for debt issuances. Trust group has been associated with some of the marquee issues like Bank of India, IDBI bank, JM Financial, L & T Finance Limited and ECL Finance Limited amongst others. The group's clientele includes leading banks, family offices, provident funds and high networth individuals (HNIs). The group has also demonstrated expertise in structuring and syndication of innovative and marquee structured transactions such as commercial mortgage backed securities for DLF Group and Phoenix Mills Group, climate and sustainable energy bonds for Hero Wind Energy Private Limited, BASEL III bonds for various banks, credit enhanced state government bonds for Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited in the past.

Trust Group's net income grew to Rs.157.21 Cr. in FY2020 as compared to Rs.140.29 Cr. in FY2019. Further, net income stood at Rs.63.43 Cr. in H1FY2021 (Provisional). The group's overall business profile is supported by TIAPL, as it conducts merchant banking activity. TIAPL had managed Rs.237130 Cr, bond placements in FY2020 as against Rs.211444 Cr. bond placements in FY 2019. For H1FY2021, TIAPL has placed bond of Rs.1,35,970 Cr. which includes clients like Power Finance Corporation Limited, Rural Electrification Corporation Limited and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. Borrowings increased to Rs.1559.19 Cr. as on September 30, 2020 (Provisional) from Rs.1161.45 Cr. as on March 31, 2020. Incremental debt was utilized to increase in investment portfolio and the same stood at Rs.1674.75 Cr. as on Sep 30, 2020 (Provisional). This led to increase in gearing to 3.63 times as on Sep 30, 2020 (Provisional) from 2.84 times as on Mar 31, 2020.

Acuite believes that the government's thrust on deepening the corporate bond market and regulatory initiatives in that direction should help in augmenting the volumes in the bond market. This should augur well for established players like Trust group who have a demonstrated track record in the domestic debt markets and diversified range of offerings. Acuite believes that the group's track record and established relationships with marquee clients and investors will provide a strong platform to leverage on the opportunities created due to expected buoyancy in the volumes of the bond market.

#### **Weaknesses:**

- **Susceptible to volatility in demand in the debt capital market**

The revenues of the Trust group are linked to level of activity in the bond markets which in turn is linked to the overall economic activity. Any significant slowdown in the economy will result in lower demand for funds which in turn would translate to lower volumes of bond issuances. The corporate bond market in India has mostly been dominated by issuances from non-banking finance companies. Recently, the NBFC sector in India witnessed several credit events which led to reduced investor appetite, especially for the moderate quality issuers for a brief period of time. Occurrence of significant credit events such as credit cliffs i.e. sharp deterioration in credit quality, often results in a material decline in the bond prices and impacts the liquidity of the counter. Such events could trigger demands for accelerated payments by lenders in case of pledge based borrowings.

The group has had exposure to certain bonds which faced credit cliffs in the recent past, however, they have been able to initiate prompt corrective action and materially curtail their exposures to these counters. The group still has certain residual exposure to low rated bonds which are expected to be illiquid till a resolution is in place for these issuers. Trust Group has written off the amount of Rs.30.49 Cr in FY2020 against its exposure to investments like DHFL, JSEL and Reliance Capital.

Any significant concentration to a single bond which faces a credit cliff exposes the group to a high level of credit and liquidity risk. Top 5 bonds investment contribute ~44% of the total investment portfolio as on November 30, 2020 (Consolidated) and 11% of the total investment portfolio (Consolidated) is invested in A & below rated papers. Any decision by the lender to curtail drawings/ increase margin requirements against such bonds to which the group is highly exposed will have an impact on the financial flexibility.

Acuité, therefore, believes that the group's performance will be susceptible to volumes in the bond markets, adverse macro-economic events and ability to maintain an optimal risk return trade off in respect of its investment exposures. The group's ability to maintain an optimal buffer of unencumbered liquid investments (liquid investments over and above the stipulated coverage) at all times will be critical.

#### Rating Sensitivities

- Level of exposure below investment grade category
- Unencumbered liquid investments
- Any changes in credit quality of major investments in inventories

**Material Covenants:** None

#### Liquidity Position: Adequate

Trust group's (Consolidated) assets as on September 30, 2020, mostly comprises of liquid investments in PSU bonds and corporate bonds. These assets are largely held for trading activities, so there is no scheduled repayment against them. The group also has moderate exposures to certain non-core assets such as advances for property, loans/investments to sister concerns. The management expects to unwind some of these exposures over the near term. The borrowings comprise a mix of pledge based overdraft, commercial paper, non-convertible debentures (NCDs) and loans from sister concerns. The liquidity profile of the Trust Group is adequate marked by way of unutilized working capital limits stood at Rs.355.04 Cr. (Consolidated) as on September 30, 2020 and unencumbered and free securities amount stood at Rs. 316.34 Cr. (Consolidated) of the total investment portfolio as on September 30, 2020. The company has cash and bank balances of Rs.15.16 Cr. as on September 30, 2020.

#### Outlook: Stable

Acuité believes that Trust group will maintain 'Stable' credit risk profile over the medium term supported by the group's well established market position in the domestic capital markets and experienced management. The outlook may be revised to 'Positive' in case of a significant and sustained growth in the scale of operations while improving its profitability and gearing metrics. Conversely, the outlook may be revised to 'Negative' in case of significant decline in operating performance, deterioration in the credit quality of major exposures, or elevated refinancing risk due to challenges in maintaining adequate liquidity buffers.

#### About the Rated Entity TCSP- Key Financials (Consolidated)

Parameters	Unit	FY2020 (Actual)	FY19 (Actual)
Total Assets	Rs. Cr.	1772.93	2021.06
Total Income*	Rs. Cr.	157.21	140.29
PAT	Rs. Cr.	56.07	54.25
Net Worth^	Rs. Cr.	409.22	372.60
Return on Average Assets (RoAA)	(%)	2.96	2.75
Return on Average Net Worth (RoNW)	(%)	14.34	15.56
Total Debt/Tangible Net Worth (Gearing)	Times	2.84	4.19

\*Total income equals to Total Income net off interest expense

^adjusted for minority interest

### About the Rated Entity TIAPL- Key Financials (Standalone)

Parameters	Unit	FY20 (Actual)	FY19 (Actual)
Total Assets	Rs. Cr.	875.68	1107.63
Total Income*	Rs. Cr.	81.06	80.74
PAT	Rs. Cr.	39.16	39.16
Net Worth	Rs. Cr.	311.05	271.88
Return on Average Assets (RoAA)	(%)	3.95	3.50
Return on Average Net Worth (RoNW)	(%)	13.44	15.52
Total Debt/Tangible Net Worth (Gearing)	Times	1.75	3.03

\*Total income equals to Total Income net off interest expense

### Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA (if applicable)

None

### Any Other Information

None

### Applicable Criteria

- Consolidation of Companies: <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-60.htm>
- Default Recognition - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-52.htm>
- Non- Banking Financing Entities - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-44.htm>
- Financial Ratios And Adjustments - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-53.htm>

### Note on complexity levels of the rated instrument

<https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-55.htm>

### Rating History (Upto last three years)

Date	Name of Instrument / Facilities	Term	Amount (Rs. Cr.)	Ratings/Outlook
February 12, 2020	Working Capital Demand Loan	Long Term	150.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
	Working Capital Demand Loan	Long Term	300.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
	Overdraft	Long Term	200.00*	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
	Proposed Bank Facility	Long Term	150.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
	Commercial Paper	Short Term	350.00	ACUITE A1+ (Reaffirmed)
	Proposed Commercial Paper	Short Term	100.00	ACUITE A1+ (REaffirmed)
March 06, 2019	Working Capital Demand Loan	Long Term	150.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
	Working Capital Demand Loan	Long Term	300.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
	Overdraft	Long Term	200.00*	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)

	Proposed Bank Facility	Long Term	150.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Assigned)
	Commercial Paper	Short Term	350.00	ACUITE A1+ (Reaffirmed)
	Proposed Commercial Paper	Short Term	100.00	ACUITE A1+ (Assigned)
Nov 21, 2018	Working Capital Demand Loan	Long Term	100.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Assigned)
	Working Capital Demand Loan	Long Term	300.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Assigned)
	Overdraft	Long Term	200.00*	ACUITE A+/Stable (Assigned)
	Commercial Paper	Short Term	350.00	ACUITE A1+ (Assigned)

\*includes sublimit of working capital limit of Rs. 100 Cr.

#### \*Annexure – Details of instruments rated

Name of the Facilities	Date of Issuance	Coupon Rate	Maturity Date	Size of the Issue (Rs. Cr.)	Ratings/Outlook
Working Capital Demand Loan	NA	NA	NA	150.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
Working Capital Demand Loan	NA	NA	NA	300.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
Overdraft	NA	NA	NA	200.00*	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
Proposed Bank Facility	NA	NA	NA	150.00	ACUITE A+/Stable (Reaffirmed)
Commercial Paper	NA	NA	NA	350.00	ACUITE A1+ (Reaffirmed)
Proposed Commercial Paper	NA	NA	NA	100.00	ACUITE A1+ (Reaffirmed)

\*includes sublimit of working capital limit of Rs. 100 Cr.

#### Contacts

Analytical	Rating Desk
<p>Mohit Jain Senior Vice President- Rating Operations Tel: 022-49294071 <a href="mailto:mohit.jain@acuite.in">mohit.jain@acuite.in</a></p> <p>Simranjeet Kaur Rating Analyst - Rating Operations Tel: 022-49294073 <a href="mailto:simranjeet.kaur@acuite.in">simranjeet.kaur@acuite.in</a></p>	<p>Varsha Bist Senior Manager - Rating Desk Tel: 022-49294021 <a href="mailto:rating.desk@acuite.in">rating.desk@acuite.in</a></p>

**About Acuite Ratings & Research:**

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