

## Press Release

**Sri Balaji Tollways (Madurai) Private Limited**

October 14, 2021



**Rating Reaffirmed**

<b>Total Bank Facilities Rated*</b>	Rs. 150.00 Cr.
<b>Long Term Rating</b>	ACUITE BBB/ Outlook: Stable (Reaffirmed)

\* Refer Annexure for details

### Rating Rationale

Acuité has reaffirmed its long term rating of '**ACUITE BBB**' (**read as ACUITE triple B**) to the Rs.150.00 Cr bank facilities of Sri Balaji Tollways (Madurai) Private Limited (SBTPL). The outlook is '**Stable**'.

The reaffirmation in ratings continues to take into account SPK's experienced promoters, established track record and healthy order book position. The rating also factors in its healthy financial risk profile and efficient working capital cycle. These strengths are, however, partially constrained by its significant geographical concentration in revenue profile, inherent risk of susceptibility to tender based operations and risk of withdrawal of partner's capital.

### About the Company

Sri Balaji Tollways (Madurai) Private Limited (SBTPL) was incorporated on 26 February, 2016 and it is a special purpose vehicle (SPV) promoted by SPK And Co (SPK) and Sri Venkatachalamapathy Constructions to undertake widening of Madurai Ring Road from Double Lane to Four Lane in the state of Tamil Nadu on Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Toll Basis. Project Road starts at Meenakshi Mission Hospital and ends at Kappalur having a design length of 27.20 kilometres (km). The project has been awarded by Tamil Nadu Road Infrastructure Development Corporation TNRIDC for a concession period of 20 years from the Appointed Date including 2 years of the construction period. The project achieved its commercial operations from November 2019.

### Analytical Approach

Acuité has considered the standalone business and financial risk profiles of the SBTPL to arrive at this rating. Further SBTPL is strengthened by the financial and operational support from the parent company, SPK.

### Key Rating Drivers

#### Strengths

##### • Moderate traffic potential of the project; Strong sponsor support

SBTPL was incorporated in 2016, it is a special purpose vehicle (SPV) promoted by S.P.K. & Co to undertake widening of Madurai Ring Road from Double Lane to Four Lane in the state of Tamil Nadu on Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Toll Basis. SBTPL is promoted by; Mr. S. Nagarajan holds 67 percent of the shareholding and he has about two decades of experience in the civil construction industry. Further, he is the Managing Partner for SPK, the sponsoring entity has been in the road construction business for nearly two decades. Good traffic movement between Kappalur - Madurai connectivity support traffic volume, industry-backed traffic, leading to revenue growth over the medium term. The company has reported toll collections about 24.84 Cr in FY2021; its first full year of operations and Rs.6.17 Cr in 3MFY2022.

##### • Healthy financial risk profile

SBTPL's financial risk profile is healthy, is aided by a healthy networth, strong capital structure and robust debt protection metrics. SBTPL has healthy net worth at Rs. 134.18 Cr as on March 31, 2020 (prov) as against Rs.126.59 Cr as on previous year ending due to accretion of reserves during the same period. Healthy net worth couple with moderate debt levels show the healthy capital structure marked by gearing (debt-to-equity) and total outside liabilities to tangible networth (TOL/TNW) levels of 0.90 times and 1.02 times as on March 31, 2021 (Prov). Debt protection metrics were also moderate, reflected in debt service coverage ratio (DSCR) and net cash accrual to total debt ratio (NCA/TD) of 2.59 times and 0.10 times, respectively, in FY2021 (Prov). SBTPL generated cash accruals of Rs.11.81 Cr in FY2021 (Prov), while its maturing debt obligations were in the range of Rs.3.75 Cr during the same period. The cash accruals of the company are estimated to remain around Rs.11-15 Cr during 2022-24 while their repayment obligations are estimated to

be around Rs.5-6 Cr during the same period. The average debt service coverage ratio (DSCR) is expected to be over 2 times over the tenure of the term loan, backed by prudent cash flow generating capacity of the project and low annual debt servicing obligation. The debt has a long tenure of 13 years, thereby spreading out principal repayment and reducing annual debt servicing obligation. Given the healthy cash flow cushion available for meeting debt servicing obligation and the steady toll revenue, the debt protection metrics should remain comfortable over the tenure of the debt. However, any additional debt, over and above the permitted indebtedness, taken by the company, will remain a rating sensitivity factor. Acuité believes that the financial risk profile of the company is expected to remain healthy over the medium term on account of no significant capex plans over the medium term.

### Weaknesses

- **Susceptibility of toll revenue to volatility in traffic volume - inherent traffic volume risk**

The project remains exposed to risks inherent in BOT (toll) road projects, including risks arising from variation in traffic volumes over the project stretch and its dependence on the economic activity in the surrounding regions, movement in WPI (for a toll rate hike), political acceptability of toll rate hike, development/improvement of alternate routes and the likelihood of toll leakages. Any reduction in either of these will have an adverse impact on toll collections. As commercial vehicles constitute a major portion of traffic on the road stretch, traffic volume will remain vulnerable to an economic slowdown. The cash flows of a toll-based project are dependent on traffic volumes which in turn are largely influenced by the level of economic activity in and around the area of operation. In the event of a project's cash flows being insufficient to meet its debt servicing commitments/maintenance commitments, the support would be required to be extended from SPK.

- **Ensuring regular and periodic maintenance expenditure within budgeted levels**

Periodic maintenance for the SBTPL due by FY2024-25 and SBTPL's ability to execute planned major maintenance (MM) expenditures the activity within stipulated timelines and budgeted cost remains critical.

### Liquidity Position: Adequate

Liquidity is adequate, with expected average DSCR above 2 times throughout the debt tenure. Further, with an unencumbered cash balance of Rs.6.17 Cr as on March 31, 2021 (Prov.). Further, the sponsor company SPK and Co provided the lien marked Fixed deposit Rs.125 Cr against SPTPL's entire debt. Toll revenue will remain sufficiently healthy to meet repayment of Rs. 5-6 Cr per annum over the next three fiscals. Acuité believes that the liquidity of the company is likely to remain adequate over the medium term on account of healthy cash accruals against its repayment obligations.

### Rating Sensitivities

- Significant improvement in scale of operations, while maintaining profitability margins
- The company incurs higher-than-anticipated routine O&M and major maintenance expense
- Any additional debt undertaken.

### Outlook: Stable

Acuité believes that the outlook on SBTPL's rated facilities will remain 'Stable' over the medium term on account of the steady flow of toll revenues from the project coupled with the strong support of sponsors. The outlook may be revised to 'Positive' in case of a significant improvement in toll revenues and improvement in cash flows from operations. Conversely, the outlook may be revised to 'Negative' in case of a sharp decline in toll revenues or cash flow and/or lack of timely support from the sponsor.

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

	Unit	FY21 (Provisional)	FY20 (Actual)
Operating Income	Rs. Cr.	24.84	14.19
PAT	Rs. Cr.	7.59	(1.28)
PAT Margin	(%)	30.54	(9.05)
Total Debt/Tangible Net Worth	Times	0.90	0.97
PBDIT/Interest	Times	2.88	2.21

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

None

**Any other information**

None

**Material Covenants**

None

**Applicable Criteria**

- Default Recognition - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-52.htm>
- Financial Ratios And Adjustments - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-53.htm>
- Entities In Services Sector - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-50.htm>
- Infrastructure Entities - <https://www.acuite.in/view-rating-criteria-51.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
18-Aug-2020	Term Loan	Long Term	125.00	ACUITE BBB/Stable (Assigned)
	Proposed Bank Facility	Long Term	25.00	ACUITE BBB/Stable (Assigned)

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

Lender's Name	Name of the Facilities	Date of Issuance	Coupon Rate	Maturity Date	Size of the Issue (Rs. Cr.)	Ratings/Outlook
UCO Bank	Term Loan	07-04-2017	5-6.50%	30-06-2033	125.00	ACUITE BBB/Stable (Reaffirmed)
Proposed Long term bank facility	Proposed Bank Facility	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	25.00	ACUITE BBB/Stable (Reaffirmed)

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**About Acuité Ratings & Research:**

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