

RATCHTHANI LEASING PLC

No. 120/2023
9 October 2023

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Company Rating:	A-
Issue Ratings:	
Senior unsecured	A-
Outlook:	Stable

Last Review Date: 14/09/23

Company Rating History:

Date	Rating	Outlook/Alert
10/04/20	A-	Stable
14/03/19	A-	Alert Negative
19/10/16	A-	Stable
25/01/12	BBB+	Stable

Contacts:

Siriwan Weeramethachai

siriwan@trisrating.com

Pawin Thachasongtham

pawin@trisrating.com

Jittrapan Pantaleard

jittrapan@trisrating.com

Taweekok Jiamsakunthum

taweekok@trisrating.com

Narumol Charnchanavivat

narumol@trisrating.com



WWW.TRISRATING.COM

RATIONALE

TRIS Rating affirms the company rating on Ratchthani Leasing PLC (THANI) and the ratings on THANI's outstanding senior unsecured debentures at "A-" with a "stable" outlook. At the same time, TRIS Rating assigns a rating of "A-" to THANI's proposed issue of up to THB4 billion senior unsecured debentures due within four years. The proceeds are intended for use in business operations and debt repayment.

The company rating on THANI incorporates a rating enhancement from its stand-alone credit profile (SACP) to reflect the company's status as a "strategically important" entity of Thanachart Capital PLC (TCAP), rated "A/stable". The enhancement reflects THANI's strong revenue and cash flow contributions to TCAP. THANI also receives ongoing business and financial support from TCAP.

The SACP on THANI at "bbb+" reflects its strong position in the commercial truck and luxury car hire-purchase (HP) loan market. The rating also takes into consideration the company's ability to maintain a strong capital base as well as sufficient funding and liquidity. However, the strengths are pressured by the company's weakening earnings capacity caused by rising funding costs, lower yield resulting from intense competition, and a potential rise in credit cost amid an uncertain economic environment.

We expect THANI to maintain a strong market position in HP loans for commercial trucks over the next two to three years, despite its conservative growth strategy. At the end of the second quarter of 2023 (2Q23), outstanding loans stood at THB55.3 billion, up by 3% year-to-date. We project that THANI's outstanding loans will increase gradually by 6%-7% per year in 2023-2025, backed mainly by truck HP in the consumption, energy, and agriculture sectors, whose demand remains strong. THANI has also expanded into floor-plan loans for dealers and title loans for its existing clients. In the longer term, we view that the diversification should help support its continuous business expansion and alleviate pressure on loan yields given a mix of higher yields from title loans.

In terms of asset quality, THANI's cautious growth strategy and efficient collection system have resulted in improved asset quality. The ratio of stage-3 loans (non-performing loans -- NPLs) fell to 2.5% at the end of 2022 from 3.8% at the end of 2021 although the NPL ratio increased slightly to 2.7% at the end of June 2023. In our view, NPLs may continue to rise over the next few years if the company expands its business more actively in an environment of intense competition and still-weak economic conditions. Nonetheless, the rise in NPL should be manageable. This would be supported by more prudent loan approvals, efficient debt collections, and acceleration of NPL write-offs.

We expect THANI to maintain earnings capacity in the "moderate" range over the next 2-3 years, despite higher provision expenses and a lower interest spread. THANI's earnings capacity, as measured by earnings before taxes to average risk-weighted assets (EBT/ARWA), decreased slightly to 4.1% in the first half of 2023 (1H23, annualized), from 4.3% in 2022 despite improved interest income from credit expansion. The drop was caused by high credit cost, losses on sales of repossessed vehicles, funding cost, and operating costs. We project EBT/ARWA to fall further to the 3% range in 2023-2025, but still supports the current level of THANI's SACP.

CreditUpdate, reviews ratings of companies or debt issues that have already been rated by TRIS Rating. The CreditUpdate occurs when new debt instruments are issued or if significant events have taken place that may impact a company's current ratings or when current ratings are cancelled. The CreditUpdate announces whether a rating has been "upgraded," "downgraded," "affirmed" or "cancelled." The update includes information to supplement the previously published ratings.

Credit Updates are part of TRIS Rating's monitoring process. TRIS Rating monitors every rating it assigns until either the debt instrument matures or the rating contract ends. To keep the public informed of changing situations, TRIS Rating periodically issues announcements about the credit ratings it monitors.

THANI's capital is assessed as "strong", with a risk-adjusted capital (RAC) ratio of 21.9% at the end of 2Q23. In terms of financial leverage, its debt to equity (D/E) ratio stood at 3.6 times at the end of 2Q23, well below the D/E covenant on its debt obligations of 10 times.

We assess the company's funding and liquidity position as "adequate". The company's access to both debt and equity capital markets as well as credit facilities from financial institutions provide diversified funding sources that support its business expansion.

RATING OUTLOOK

The "stable" outlook is based on TRIS Rating's expectation that THANI will maintain its current market position, capital position, and earnings capability. The outlook also takes into consideration our anticipation that the company's asset quality will remain manageable amid an uncertain economic environment.

RATING SENSITIVITIES

THANI's SACP could be revised upward if its capital base is materially strengthened, with the RAC ratio hovering at a level above 25% for a sustained period. The issuer credit rating (ICR) could be upgraded if the rating on TCAP is upgraded. The SACP could be revised downward if the company's capital position weakens materially, with the RAC ratio falling below 12% and/or asset quality deteriorating substantially to the extent that EBT/ARWA falls below 1.5%. A rating downgrade on TCAP could also pressure THANI's ratings.

RELATED CRITERIA

- Group Rating Methodology, 7 September 2022
- Issue Rating Criteria, 15 June 2021
- Nonbank Financial Institution Methodology, 17 February 2020

Ratchthani Leasing PLC (THANI)

Company Rating:	A-
Issue Ratings:	
THANI23NA: THB3,439 million senior unsecured debentures due 2023	A-
THANI247A: THB593.7 million senior unsecured debentures due 2024	A-
THANI24DA: THB500 million senior unsecured debentures due 2024	A-
THANI251B: THB1,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2025	A-
THANI254A: THB1,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2025	A-
THANI255A: THB593 million senior unsecured debentures due 2025	A-
THANI25DA: THB2,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2025	A-
THANI25DB: THB1,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2025	A-
THANI262A: THB1,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2026	A-
THANI262B: THB1,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2026	A-
THANI264A: THB700 million senior unsecured debentures due 2026	A-
THANI265A: THB2,500 million senior unsecured debentures due 2026	A-
THANI268A: THB2,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2026	A-
THANI271A: THB651.1 million senior unsecured debentures due 2027	A-
THANI272A: THB1,000 million senior unsecured debentures due 2027	A-
THANI274A: THB1,300 million senior unsecured debentures due 2027	A-
Up to THB4,000 million senior unsecured debentures due within 4 years	A-
Rating Outlook:	Stable

TRIS Rating Co., Ltd.

Silom Complex Building, 24th Floor, 191 Silom Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand Tel: +66 2 098 3000

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