

July 18, 2023

Duncan Engineering Limited: Continue on rating watch with negative implications

Summary of rating action

Instrument*	Previous Rated Amount (Rs. crore)	Current Rated Amount (Rs. crore)	Rating Action
Long term - Fund based – Cash credit	10.00	9.00	[ICRA]A-; continue on rating watch with negative implications
Short term – Non-fund based - Others	1.10	2.10	[ICRA]A2+; continue on rating watch with negative implications
Total	11.10	11.10	

*Instrument details are provided in Annexure-I

Rationale

The existing parent company of Duncan Engineering Limited - Oriental Carbon and Chemicals Limited - has proposed a demerger wherein it will be demerged into two companies with the manufacturing business shifted to a new entity and the existing entity having the investment business. The company with the investment business will be the parent company of DEL after the demerger. As the investment company is likely to have a weaker credit profile vis-à-vis the existing company, the ratings of Duncan Engineering Limited are kept on watch with negative implications. ICRA will continue to monitor the developments in this regard and will take a suitable rating action as more clarity emerges on the demerger.

The ratings factor in the strong parentage of the existing parent - Oriental Carbon & Chemicals Limited (OCCL, rated [ICRA]AA-/ [ICRA]A1+; under rating watch with developing implications) - till the time the demerger is complete, the extensive experience of DEL in the pneumatic products industry and its established relationships with various customers and suppliers. Further, the ratings factor in the comfortable debt protection metrics, supported by the company's adequate liquidity position. The ratings are, however, constrained by the small scale of operations, coupled with limited bargaining power and stiff competition from large players. The ratings are further constrained by the vulnerability of profitability to the volatility in key raw material (steel and special alloys) prices.

OCCL holds a 50.01% ownership in DEL. It has supported the company in the past by extending corporate guarantees to its bank lines, although the current bank limits are not backed by corporate guarantees from the parent. At present, DEL's cash generation remains stable and ICRA does not expect the company to have any funding requirements. However, in case of a distress situation, ICRA expects OCCL to support DEL. With a stable cash generation amid limited capex plans or debt repayments, DEL's credit profile is expected to remain healthy, going forward. With low levels of debt, the financial leverage (gross debt/OPBDITA) was 0.1 times by the end of FY2023 and is expected to continue to be comfortable, going forward. The interest coverage ratio was 79.6 times in FY2023 and is expected to improve further on expectations of stable operating profits and declining interest costs.

Key rating drivers and their description

Credit strengths

Established track record of company in pneumatics products industry - DEL, incorporated in 1962, was promoted as a joint venture (JV) between Schrader Bridgeport International (SB International, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tomkins Plc), and the Duncan Group (managed by the Goenka family, the promoter of OCCL). OCCL currently holds a 50.01% stake in DEL. The company manufactures pneumatic products such as air cylinders, valves and accessories. Over the decades, the company has established relationships with its key clients, which ensure repeat orders and, thus, provide revenue visibility for DEL.

Diversified client profile and low customer concentration - DEL caters to a diversified clientele from various industries, such as power, cement, machine building, steel, automotive and material handling. The client concentration remains low with the top five clients driving 20-30% of its operating income in the last three years. Given the diversified background of its clients across sectors, DEL exhibits moderate sector-specific and client concentration risks.

Strong parentage of OCCL – At present, DEL is a subsidiary of OCCL, and the latter holds a 50.01% stake in the company. OCCL produces insoluble sulphur. While it has a dominant position in the domestic market, it has been able to position itself as the preferred/second preferred supplier to most global tyre makers. OCCL had earlier provided corporate guarantees for the bank lines of DEL although the current bank limits are not backed by a corporate guarantee from the parent. Additionally, OCCL would be ready to support DEL in case of any need, as per the stated intent of the management of the parent firm. However, with the proposed demerger, this is likely to change, resulting in the investment entity holding this stake in DEL.

Comfortable debt protection metrics- With stable cash generation amid no major capex plans or debt repayments, DEL's credit profile is expected to remain healthy, going forward. With low levels of debt, the financial leverage (gross debt/OPBDITA) was 0.1 times by the end of FY2023. The interest coverage ratio was 79.6 times in FY2023 and is expected to improve further on expectations of stable operating profits and declining interest costs.

Credit challenges

Small scale of operations with limited bargaining power - DEL deals only in pneumatic products used to control air pressure in various machines. The scale of operations is very limited and, hence, it does not have much bargaining power with suppliers and customers.

Competition from large established players - The company faces stiff competition from domestic and international players such as Rotork, Janatics, FMC, Parker etc. However, competitive pricing and good product quality enable DEL to attract repeat orders from its customers.

Profitability vulnerable to volatility in key raw material prices - The key raw materials for the company are aluminium tubes and steel rods, whose prices are volatile. The company has limited ability to pass on any adverse fluctuation in raw material prices due to the intense competition in the industry. However, there are several suppliers of these raw materials, which mitigates the supplier concentration risk.

Liquidity position: Adequate

DEL's liquidity position is expected to remain adequate, going forward, in light of the stable cash generation, healthy unencumbered cash balances (Rs. 28.8 crore at the end of FY2023) and unutilised bank limits. The company does not have any significant capex plans apart from the Rs. 6-crore capex in FY2024 which is expected to be funded using internal accruals. The company does not have any major repayments as well. Thus, the liquidity profile is expected to remain adequate, going forward.

Rating sensitivities

Positive factors – ICRA will resolve the watch as more clarity emerges on the proposed demerger. The ratings may be upgraded if there is a significant increase in the company's revenue and operating profits on a sustained basis.

Negative factors – ICRA will resolve the watch as more clarity emerges on the proposed demerger. The ratings may be downgraded if DEL's linkage with the parent weakens and/or if there is any significant deterioration in DEL's standalone financial profile. The ratings may also be impacted if the credit profile of the parent entity weakens.

Analytical approach

Analytical Approach	Comments
Applicable rating methodologies	Corporate Credit Rating Methodology Impact of Parent or Group Support on an Issuer's Credit Rating
Parent/Group support	ICRA factors in the parentage of Oriental Carbon & Chemicals Limited while assigning the ratings for DEL. There is a track record of support from OCCL in the form of corporate guarantees backing the bank lines of DEL in the past. ICRA expects OCCL to support DEL in a situation of distress, though at present DEL's performance remains stable with no major funding requirements
Consolidation/Standalone	For arriving at the ratings, ICRA has considered the standalone financials of DEL

About the company

Duncan Engineering Limited, incorporated as Schrader Duncan Limited in 1962, was promoted as a JV between Schrader Bridgeport International (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tomkins Plc) and the Duncan Group (managed by the JP Goenka family). DEL manufactures automotive tyre valves and pneumatic products, such as air cylinders, valves, and accessories. Its plant is at Ranjangaon, Pune.

Key financial indicators (audited)

DEL Standalone	FY2022	FY2023*
Operating income	55.8	70.1
PAT	6.2	9.9
OPBDIT/OI	16.6%	18.7%
PAT/OI	11.2%	14.1%
Total outside liabilities/Tangible net worth (times)	0.3	0.4
Total debt/OPBDIT (times)	0.1	0.1
Interest coverage (times)	47.0	79.6

PAT: Profit after tax; OPBDIT: Operating profit before depreciation, interest, taxes and amortisation; Amount in Rs crore; *provisional

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA: Not applicable

Any other information: None

Rating history for past three years

Instrument		Current rating (FY2024)			Chronology of rating history for the past 3 years				
		Type	Amount rated (Rs. crore)	Amount outstanding as of Mar 31, 2023 (Rs. crore)	Date & rating in FY2024	Date & rating in FY2023	Date & rating in FY2022	Date & rating in FY2021	
					Jul 18, 2023	Aug 12, 2022	Oct 05, 2021	Feb 19, 2021	Jul 20, 2020
1	Fund based – Cash credit	Long term	9.00	--	[ICRA]A-; Rating watch with negative implications	[ICRA]A-; @	[ICRA]A- (Stable)	[ICRA]A+(CE) (Stable) rating withdrawn; [ICRA]A- (Stable) Assigned	[ICRA]A+ (CE) (Stable)

2	Non-fund based - Others	Short term	2.10	--	[ICRA]A2+; Rating watch with negative implications	[ICRA]A2+; @	[ICRA]A2+	[ICRA]A1(CE) rating withdrawn; [ICRA]A2+ assigned	[ICRA]A1 (CE)
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@ - Rating watch with negative implications

Complexity level of the rated instruments

Instrument	Complexity Indicator
Fund based – Cash credit	Simple
Non-fund based - Others	Very Simple

The Complexity Indicator refers to the ease with which the returns associated with the rated instrument could be estimated. It does not indicate the risk related to the timely payments on the instrument, which is rather indicated by the instrument's credit rating. It also does not indicate the complexity associated with analysing an entity's financial, business, industry risks or complexity related to the structural, transactional or legal aspects. Details on the complexity levels of the instruments are available on ICRA's website: [Click Here](#)

Annexure I: Instrument details

ISIN	Instrument Name	Date of Issuance	Coupon Rate	Maturity	Amount Rated (Rs. crore)	Current Rating and Outlook
NA	Fund based – Cash credit	NA	NA	NA	9.00	[ICRA]A-; Rating watch with negative implications
NA	Non-fund based - Others	NA	NA	NA	2.10	[ICRA]A2+; Rating watch with negative implications

Source: Company

[Please click here to view details of lender-wise facilities rated by ICRA](#)

Annexure II: List of entities considered for consolidated analysis – Not Applicable

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About ICRA Limited:

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Today, ICRA and its subsidiaries together form the ICRA Group of Companies (Group ICRA). ICRA is a Public Limited Company, with its shares listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange. The international Credit Rating Agency Moody's Investors Service is ICRA's largest shareholder.

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Branches



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