



Press Release

AIC Iron Industries Private Limited

January 13, 2021

Ratings

Sl. No.	Instrument/Facility	Amount (Rs. Crore)	Ratings	Ratings Action
1.	Long Term Bank Facilities	74.25	IVR BBB/Stable (IVR Triple B with Stable Outlook)	Assigned
2.	Short Term Bank Facilities	11.75	IVR A3+ (IVR A Three Plus)	Assigned
	Total	86.00 (Rupee Eighty six crore)		

Details of Facilities are in Annexure 1

Detailed Rationale

The ratings assigned to the above bank facilities of AIC Iron Industries Private Limited (AIPL), a part of AIC group derives strength from the extensive experience of the Group's promoters in iron and steel industry, semi-integrated nature of operations, strategic location of plant and steady increase in scale of operations of the AIC group with improvement in operating margin. The ratings also positively factor in AIC group's satisfactory financial risk profile marked by satisfactory gearing and debt protection metrics. However, these rating strengths remain constrained due to project execution and stabilisation risks associated with ongoing capex and susceptibility of its profitability to volatility in raw material and finished goods prices. The ratings also consider high competition and cyclical nature in the steel industry.

Key Rating Sensitivities

Upward Factors

- Significant growth in scale of business with improvement in profitability metrics thereby leading to overall improvement in cash accruals on a sustained basis
- Improvement in the capital structure with improvement in TOL/TNW and improvement in debt protection metrics
- Effective working capital management with improvement in operating cycle and liquidity

Downward Factors



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- Decline in operating income and/or profitability impacting the debt coverage indicators
- Higher than-envisaged debt-funded capex and/or delays in implementation and stabilisation of projects
- Withdrawal of subordinated unsecured loans amounting to Rs.75 crore leading to deterioration in the capital structure and debt protection metrics
- Elongation in the operating cycle impacting the liquidity and higher average utilisation in bank borrowings to more than 90% on a sustained basis

List of Key Rating Drivers with Detailed Description

Key Rating Strengths

- **Experienced and resourceful promoters**

The promoters of the AIC group, the Adukia family of West Bengal have more than two decades of experience in the iron and steel industry. The overall affairs of the AIC group are being managed by Mr. Dinesh Adukia along with his brothers. The promoters are resourceful and have also supported the group companies by infusing subordinated unsecured loans as and when required to support the business operations.

- **Semi-integrated nature of operations of the group and strategic location of plants**

The manufacturing facilities of the AIC group are located in purulia and burdwan districts of West Bengal which is in close proximity to various steel plants, nearby coal fields and various producers/dealers of its main raw materials. This results in easy availability of quality raw materials and savings in transportation costs. Moreover, RISPPPL is a semi-integrated steel player engaged in manufacturing of sponge iron, silico manganese, billets and thermo mechanically treated (TMT) bars with a captive power plant. However, AIPL and NIPL are engaged in manufacturing of MS billets, TMT bars and other rolled steel products and source a portion of their raw materials requirement such as Sponge Iron, Silico manganese from RISPPPL. Currently, the group is also in the process of setting up sponge iron and power plant in AIPL to further backward integrate its operations. Accordingly, vertical integration in operations coupled with proximity to the source of raw materials & end user market provides a competitive edge to the AIC Group.

- **Steady growth in scale of operations with improvement in EBITDA margin**



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Total operating income of AIC group has increased at a CAGR of ~30% over FY18-FY20 driven by expansion of manufacturing facility for billet, silico manganese, TMT and other rolled steel products. Besides, the group has been able to scale up operations due to stabilisation and increase in capacity utilisation across all its product segment. The operating profitability witnessed an improvement with EBITDA margin at 5.94% during FY20 as compared to 5.56% in FY18 supported by backward integration measures and economies of scale benefits. During H1FY21, the group achieved revenue of Rs. 410 crore.

- **Satisfactory financial risk profile marked by satisfactory gearing and debt protection metrics**

The AIC group on a combined basis, has satisfactory financial risk profile with healthy net worth base of ~Rs195 crore (treating subordinated unsecured loans of Rs.75 crore as quasi equity based on undertaking received from the group and as stipulated in the bank sanction letters) as on March 31, 2020 (Prov.). The overall gearing of AIC group remained satisfactory at 0.97x as on March 31, 2020 despite marginal moderation as against 0.56x as on March 31, 2018. Moderation in overall gearing was mainly due to debt funded capex over FY18-FY20 towards expansion of manufacturing facility for silico manganese, billets, TMT, captive power plant and other rolled steel products. The debt protection metrics as indicated by interest coverage ratio and Total debt/GCA stood comfortable at 5.42x and 4.72 years respectively in FY20 (provisional). Total indebtedness of the group as reflected by TOL/ATNW stood comfortable at 1.46x as on March 31, 2020 (Prov.). Infomerics expects, the capital structure of the AIC group though expected to be moderated in the near term due to availment of debt to fund the ongoing capex will continue to remain satisfactory.

Key Rating Weakness:

- **Vulnerable to project execution and stabilisation risks associated with ongoing capex**
The group is undertaking capex towards expansion and capacity enhancement. It is setting up sponge iron plant (105000 MTPA), Power plant (12 MW), MS Pipe/strips (49500 MTPA) and billets (36000 MT) in AIPL with a total project cost of Rs. 80 crore funded through term loan of Rs. 55 crore (Rs.40 crore already tied-up) and rest through promoters fund in the form of unsecured loan and internal accruals. The group has already successfully commissioned and started the commercial production of MS Strips/Pipes in January 2020



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and Billets in October 2020. Total capex incurred till October 14, 2020 is Rs.52.86 crore, funded by term loan of Rs. 25.95 crore and balance through internal accruals and unsecured loan. Sponge Iron and Power plant project is expected to be completed by April 2022. The group is also undertaking capex in NNIPPL for enhancement in production capacity through upgradation of furnace and rolling mill with total project cost of Rs. 9.00 crore funded through term loan of Rs.6 crore (already tied-up) and rest through promoters fund in the form of unsecured loan and internal accruals. The project is expected to be completed by April 2021.

- **Volatility in the prices of raw materials and finished goods**

Major raw-materials required for the group are iron-ore and coal for manufacturing of sponge iron. Raw-material accounted for ~75-80% of total cost of production in the last three fiscals. The group lacks backward integration for its basic raw-materials (iron ore and coal) and has to procure the maximum requirement from open market. Since the raw material is the major cost driver and the prices of which are volatile in nature, the profitability of the group is susceptible to fluctuation in raw-material prices. On the other hand, the finished foods are also volatile and dependent upon economic cycles and global demand supply scenarios.

- **High competition and cyclicity in the steel industry**

The group faces stiff competition from not only established players, but also from the unorganised sector. Besides, the steel industry is cyclical in nature and witnessed prolonged periods where it faced a downturn due to excess capacity leading to a downtrend in the prices. However, the outlook for the steel industry in the short to medium term appears to be good with expected robust demand in the domestic markets driven by various government initiatives and expected improvement in the infrastructure and real estate sector. However, any adverse fluctuations in the prices of finished products or any downturn in the steel sector may impact the AIC group adversely.

Analytical Approach: Consolidated

For arriving at the ratings, Infomerics has considered the combined financials of three companies constituting the AIC Group considering the same management and strong operational and financial linkages. The list of companies is given in **Annexure 2**.

Applicable Criteria:

Rating Methodology for Manufacturing Companies



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Financial Ratios & Interpretation (Non-financial Sector)

Liquidity Position: Adequate

The liquidity position of the AIC group is expected to remain satisfactory in the near to medium term marked by adequate cushion in expected accruals of Rs.41-63 crore as against its repayment obligations of Rs.19-24 crore during FY21-23. Moreover, the average working capital limit utilisation was ~80% during the past twelve months ended September 2020 indicating moderate liquidity buffer.

About the Company

AIC Iron Industries Private Limited was incorporated in December 2003. In February 2008, the company was taken over by Adukia group of West Bengal. The company is presently engaged in manufacturing of MS Billets and MS Strips/pipes with installed capacity of 102000 MTPA and 49500 MTPA respectively. Its manufacturing facility is located at Purulia (West Bengal).

About the Group

The promoters of AIC Group have been in the iron and steel business for more than 20 years. The AIC group is engaged in manufacturing of steel products through various companies under its folds. The companies operating under AIC Group are AIC Iron Industries Private Ltd, NN Ispat Private Limited and RAIC Integrated Sponge & Power Pvt Ltd, which are all controlled by the similar management and have common control.

Financials (Combined)

(Rs. crore)

For the year ended* / As On	31-03-2019	31-03-2020
	Combined	Combined
Total Operating Income	762.11	932.36
EBITDA	43.67	55.42
PAT	16.77	20.95
Total Debt	126.94	188.10
Adjusted Tangible Net worth	166.13	194.02
EBITDA Margin (%)	5.73	5.94
PAT Margin (%)	2.20	2.24
Overall Gearing Ratio (x)	0.76	0.97

*Classification as per Infomerics' standards.

Financials (Standalone)

(Rs. crore)



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For the year ended* / As On	31-03-2019	31-03-2020
	Audited	Provisional
Total Operating Income	170.44	199.34
EBITDA	4.82	6.34
PAT	2.53	3.55
Total Debt	18.33	28.89
Adjusted Tangible Net worth	28.91	39.40
EBITDA Margin (%)	2.83	3.18
PAT Margin (%)	1.48	1.77
Overall Gearing Ratio (x)	0.63	0.73

*Classification as per Infomerics' standards.

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA: Nil.

Any other information: Nil

Rating History for last three years:

Sr. No.	Name of Instrument/Facilities	Current Rating (Year 2020-21)			Rating History for the past 3 years		
		Type	Amount (Rs. Crore)	Ratings	Date(s) & Rating(s) assigned in 2019-20	Date(s) & Rating(s) assigned in 2018-19	Date(s) & Rating(s) assigned in 2017-18
1.	Term Loan (includes proposed limit of Rs. 5.00 crore)	Long Term	55.00	IVR BBB/ Stable	-	-	-
2.	Cash Credit	Long Term	19.25	IVR BBB/ Stable	-	-	-
3.	Non Fund Based	Short Term	11.75	IVR A3+	-	-	-

Note on complexity levels of the rated instrument: Infomerics has classified instruments rated by it on the basis of complexity and a note thereon is available at www.infomerics.com.

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About Infomerics:

Infomerics commenced rating & grading operations in April 2015 after having spent over 25 years in various segments of financial services. Infomerics is registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and accredited by Reserve Bank of India. It is gradually gaining prominence in domestic rating and/or grading space. Infomerics is striving for positioning itself as the most trusted & credible rating agency in the country and is gradually widening its product portfolio. Company's long experience in varied spectrum of financial services is helping it to fine-tune its product offerings to best suit the market.

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Annexure 1: Details of Facilities

Name of Facility	Date of Issuance	Coupon Rate/ IRR	Maturity Date	Size of Facility (Rs. Crore)	Rating / Outlook
Term Loan (includes proposed limit of Rs. 5.00 crore)	-	-	March 2027	55.00	IVR BBB/ Stable
Cash Credit	-	-	-	19.25	IVR BBB/ Stable
Non Fund Based	-	-	-	11.75	IVR A3+
Total				86.00	

Annexure 2: List of companies considered for consolidated analysis

Name of the Company	Consolidation Approach
AIC Iron Industries Private Ltd (AIPL)	Full consolidation
NN Ispat Private Limited (NNIPL)	Full consolidation
RAIC Integrated Sponge & Power Pvt Ltd (RISPPL)	Full consolidation