Singapore Company Guide Suntec REIT

Version 10 | Bloomberg: SUN SP | Reuters: SUNT.SI

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DBS Group Research . Equity

BUY

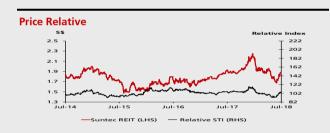
Last Traded Price (25 Jul 2018): S\$1.87 (STI : 3,326.83) Price Target 12-mth: S\$2.30 (23% upside)

Analyst

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What's New

- 2Q18 DPU of 2.474 Scts (-0.8% y-o-y) in line with expectations
- But underlying DPU down 4.2% y-o-y largely due to transitionary downtime at Suntec Office
- Suntec City Mall's turnaround continues with 2Q18 NPI up 2.4% y-o-y, tenant sales rising 5% and mid-singledigit rental reversions
- Remains leveraged to the upturn in Singapore office rents



Forecasts and Valuation				
FY Dec (S\$m)	2017A	2018F	2019F	2020F
Gross Revenue	354	360	377	409
Net Property Inc	244	242	256	279
Total Return	220	161	171	189
Distribution Inc	263	268	271	274
EPU (S cts)	6.36	6.02	6.31	6.89
EPU Gth (%)	(8)	(5)	5	9
DPU (S cts)	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.00
DPU Gth (%)	0	0	0	0
NAV per shr (S cts)	212	210	207	206
PE (X)	29.4	31.1	29.7	27.2
Distribution Yield (%)	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.3
P/NAV (x)	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Aggregate Leverage (%)	36.4	37.3	37.9	38.6
ROAE (%)	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.4
Distn. Inc Chng (%):		-	-	-
Consensus DPU (S cts):		10.0	10.0	10.1
Other Broker Recs:		B: 4	S: 4	H: 12

Source of all data on this page: Company, DBS Bank, Bloomberg Finance L.P

26 Jul 2018

Ahead of the pack

Market turning around to our expectations. We maintain our BUY call on Suntec REIT (Suntec) with a TP of S\$2.30. Since the start of the year, two other sell-side analysts have joined us in being bullish on Suntec. As CEO Mr Chan Kong Leong orchestrates the sustained turnaround of Suntec City Mall, spot office rents maintain their upward trajectory and underlying DPU improves, we believe more investors and other sell-side analysts will become convinced that Suntec is undervalued.

Where we differ – Street-high target price. We have a streethigh TP of S\$2.30 compared to consensus TP of c.S\$1.88. We believe Suntec deserves to trade towards our TP, given office buildings and shopping malls in Singapore have been recently sold on 1.7-2.7% and 3-4% exit yields respectively, below the cap rate of 3.75-4% and 5% used to value Suntec's office and retail properties. Furthermore, with office rents expected to be on a multi-year upturn, this typically coincides with office REITs such as Suntec, trading at a premium to book. Finally, our TP is pegged to a price which would allow any potential bidder to generate a 10% IRR. While we are not privy to any potential takeover offers, our analysis was done to reflect market speculation of a Suntec privatisation over the years.

Closing the rental gap. Passing rents at Suntec City Mall of S\$10-11 psf/mth are at a significant discount to other suburban malls of up to S\$17-18 psf/mth. We believe as Suntec remixes its tenant mix and picks the low-hanging fruits such as placing children stores next to the playground rather than at opposite ends of the mall, the resultant higher foot traffic, tenant sales and improving rents should act as re-rating catalysts.

Valuation:

We maintain our DCF-based TP of S\$2.30. With over 25% total return in the coming year, we reiterate our BUY call.

Key Risks to Our View:

The key risks to our bullish view are a downturn in the office market and the failure to revitalise Suntec City Mall.

At A Glance

Issued Capital (m shrs)	2,664
Mkt. Cap (S\$m/US\$m)	4,982 / 3,668
Major Shareholders (%)	
Raffles Investments Ltd	10.5
Gordon Tang	9.6
ARA Re Investment Group Sg Pte	7.1
Free Float (%)	72.8
3m Avg. Daily Val (US\$m)	13.4
ICB Industry : Financials / Real Estate Investment Trust	



WHAT'S NEW

Transitional dip

(+/-) 2Q18 DPU down 0.8% y-o-y

- 2Q18 DPU came in at 2.474 Scts (-0.8% y-o-y) translating into 1H18 DPU of 4.907 Scts (-0.2% y-o-y). 1H18 DPU represented c.49% of our FY18F and was in line with our expectations.
- However, excluding S\$10m worth of capital distributions (S\$8m in 2Q17), underlying 2Q18 would have been 2.099 Scts (-4.2% y-o-y) which represented c.23% of our FY18F DPU and was below expectations. The underperformance was largely due to weaker NPI margins at Suntec Office (76.9% versus 80% level achieved over FY17) and a weaker AUD compared to our earlier expectations.
- The overall decline in 2Q18 DPU was also attributed to a 1% increase in units on issue, lower contributions from its JV assets (One Raffles Quay and MBFC – impact of prior negative rental reversions and downtime) and 9.8% drop in NPI from Suntec Office.
- Suntec Office suffered despite committed occupancy rising to 99.7% from 97.9% in 2Q18 as the property was impacted by a drop in signing rents in prior quarters, transitionary downtime for replacement leases (effective occupancy of 94%) and contribution to the sinking fund to finance the refurbishment of the lobby and lift areas for the property. Stripping out the contribution to the sinking fund, 2Q18 NPI for Suntec Office would have fallen by 7.4% y-o-y.
- The turnaround at Suntec City Mall continued with 2Q18 revenue and NPI increasing by 2.4% and 2.7% y-o-y respectively, largely on the back of an improvement in occupancy (98.6% versus 96.8% in 2Q17).
- Meanwhile, the convention business had a good quarter with 2Q18 revenue and NPI jumping 30.9% and 110.7% y-o-y respectively as 2018 is an even year which typically results in a higher number of conventions coming to Singapore.
- The Australian properties also had a good quarter despite the headwinds from a weaker AUD, with 2Q18 NPI for 177 Pacific Highway up 4.3% y-o-y. Associate contribution from Southgate rose 191.7% y-o-y as Suntec increased its stake in the property from 25% to 50%. Office occupancy at Southgate improved marginally to 92.7% from 92.5% at end-1Q18 with Suntec guiding that it had subsequently signed a heads of agreement for an additional 7% of NLA.

(+) Upturn in foot traffic and tenant sales at Suntec City Mall continues

- The improvement at Suntec City Mall continued with 1H18 foot traffic up 8.5% y-o-y although slower than the 12.7% and 12.8% y-o-y increase reported in 1Q18 and FY17 respectively.
- The healthy increase in tenant sales was also maintained, rising 5% y-o-y in 2Q18 (+5.2% for 1H18 and +4.8% for FY17).
- We understand that over the quarter, Suntec was able to achieve positive rental reversions in the mid-single digits for Suntec City Mall.
- With management's active tenant remixing as seen by the low 59% tenant retention rate in 2Q18, repositioning of certain sections of the mall (North wing will now be a fitness and wellness zone), reduction in shop unit sizes to maximise sales efficiency, and improvements in the circulation throughout the mall, we remain confident that Suntec in on track to close the discount in rents achieved at the property compared to other suburban malls (average passing rent between S\$10-12 psf/mth compared to other suburban malls of up to S\$18 psf/mth).
- In addition, over the quarter, with the removal of secondary corridors, Suntec was able to boost net lettable area (NLA) by around 20,000 sqft. We understand that future reconfiguring of the mall, including shifting service desks, should also result in additional NLA.

(+) Stable q-o-q signing rents at Suntec Office

- In 2Q18, average signing rents for Suntec Office stood at S\$8.95 psf/mth, flat q-o-q, but up from S\$8.79 psf/mth in 2Q17. Based on these signing rents, Suntec reported that it achieved low single-digit rental reversions across its office portfolio.
- Post the renewals over the quarter, another 5.1% of leases by NLA in Suntec's office portfolio are set to expire for the remainder of the year, down 9% in the prior quarter. Another 15.1% of leases are due for renewal in FY19.
- With committed occupancies improving to 99.7% and WeWork which is taking up c.36,500 sqft of space over two floors at Tower 5 commencing in 4Q18, we believe contribution from the office should rebound in 2H, after a poor 2Q18 performance.



• Furthermore, with Suntec embarking on the upgrading of lift lobbies and washrooms at Suntec Office, we believe this should also help improve the positioning and rents of the property over time. The 3-year project is expected to commence in 4Q18 and is targeted to be completed by end-2021. Total cost for the renovation works is approximately S\$55m.

(-) Increase in gearing and borrowing costs

- On the back of the acquisition of an additional 25% interest in Southgate, aggregate leverage increased to 37.9% from 36.6% as at end-March 2018.
- However, borrowing cost was relatively stable at 2.74%.
- Meanwhile, the proportion of fixed rate debt inched up to 70% from c.65% in the prior quarter.
- NAV per unit (excluding distributions) was stable at S\$2.08.

(-) Moderating underlying DPU

- Due to the lower effective occupancies at Suntec Office and accounting for the depreciation of the AUD, we trimmed our underlying FY18-19F DPU by 2-4%. Nevertheless, we still expect DPU to be maintained over the next three years at around 10 Scts p.a. given management guidance of maintaining a stable DPU with underlying DPU projected to grow by 3% p.a. over the same period.
- With around S\$90m worth of capital gains yet to be distributed, we believe with underlying operations improving, Suntec has sufficient cash to maintain a stable DPU until underlying DPU increases beyond 10 Scts in FY21. We project capital distributions of c.S\$34m in FY18F before dropping to c.S\$10m by FY20F.
- Despite the drop in our earnings estimates, after rolling forward our DCF valuation to FY19, we maintain our TP at S\$2.30.

Maintain BUY, TP of S\$2.30

- Despite weaker-than-expected contribution from Suntec Office in 2Q18, which in some ways is transitionary in nature, causing underlying 2Q18 to fall short, we reiterate our BUY call with TP of \$\$2.30.
- We continue to like Suntec for its exposure to the expected multi-year in office rents and the turnaround of Suntec City Mall.

	Quarterly / Interim	Income Statement (S\$m)
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FY Dec	2Q2017	1Q2018	2Q2018	% chg yoy	% chg qoq
Gross revenue	87.3	90.7	90.5	3.7	(0.2)
Property expenses	(27.9)	(27.7)	(29.8)	6.9	7.5
Net Property Income	59.4	63.0	60.7	2.2	(3.6)
Other Operating expenses	(12.7)	(12.7)	(13.0)	1.8	1.7
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	-
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(28.8)	(16.9)	(15.4)	46.6	8.8
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	0.30	12.5	0.14	(53.3)	nm
Net Income	35.7	63.7	61.2	71.6	(4.0)
Тах	(1.2)	(1.7)	(1.8)	52.8	4.0
Minority Interest	(0.9)	(1.8)	(2.0)	(125.2)	10.0
Net Income after Tax	33.6	60.2	57.4	70.8	(4.6)
Total Return	33.6	60.2	57.4	70.8	(4.6)
Non-tax deductible Items	24.4	(1.9)	(1.4)	nm	(25.2)
Net Inc available for Dist.	66.0	64.8	66.0	0.0	1.8
Ratio (%)					
Net Prop Inc Margin	68.1	69.4	67.1		
Dist. Payout Ratio	100.0	100.0	100.0		

Source of all data: Company, DBS Bank



CRITICAL DATA POINTS TO WATCH

Critical Factors

Leveraged to recovery in Singapore office market. Suntec currently owns three office assets in Singapore's CBD – Suntec Office, One Raffles Quay (ORQ; 33%), and MBFC Towers 1 and 2 (33%). With expectations of multi-year recovery in Grade A office rents from 2018 onwards as new supply eases, Suntec is well positioned to ride the uptrend. Nevertheless, in the near term, there remains some downside risks to earnings from the negative rental reversions over the past year. In the medium term, the prime location of ORQ and MBFC places the REIT in a strong position to retain and attract tenants. Suntec Office has the advantage of ample car parking spaces, connectivity to two MRT stations and a wide choice of amenities, as it is located next to Suntec City Mall.

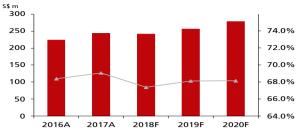
Turnaround of Suntec City Mall despite near-term retail

headwinds. With Singapore consumers cutting back on discretionary spending over the past couple of years and compared to the initial rents signed at Suntec City Mall during more buoyant times, rents at the mall had been under pressure. Nevertheless, with the recent appointment of Mr Chan Kong Leong formerly with CapitaMalls Asia, recent changes in tenant mix including the introduction of new-to-market retail brands, improved marketing, greater number of events as well as better engagement with its tenants, tenant sales and foot traffic have improved. We believe Mr Chan has the right strategy in place to turn around Suntec City Mall as he continues to change the tenant mix, thus resulting in higher retail rents over time. Evidence of a turnaround can be seen by the mall finally generating positive rental reversions this year and tenants' sales growth of c.5%.

30% stake Park Mall redevelopment. Suntec completed the sale of Park Mall for S\$412m in 4Q15, and has taken a 30% stake in the JV which will completely redevelop Park Mall into a commercial development, comprising two office towers with an ancillary retail podium. Suntec will subsequently have the option to acquire one of the two office towers. The redevelopment project and eventual acquisition of the office tower will be a long-term growth driver for the REIT.

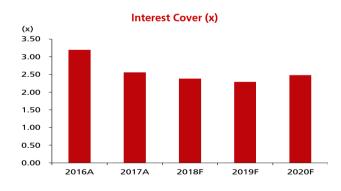
Acquisition of additional stake in Southgate property and 477 Collins Street in Melbourne. Suntec recently increased its stake in Southgate from 25% to 50%, a mixed office-and-retail property in Melbourne. In addition, the recent acquisition of a 50% interest in 477 Collins Street, which is scheduled to be completed in mid-2020, provides the REIT an earnings uplift in the medium term.

Net Property Income and Margins (%)













Balance Sheet:

Uptick in gearing expected. With Suntec likely to increase its effective interest in the Southgate Complex from 25% to 50% and its plans to acquire 477 Collins Street, its gearing is expected to stabilise closer to the 40% level by 2021. This compares to its current gearing of around 38%.

Majority of borrowings on fixed rates. As at 30 June 2018, approximately 70% of Suntec's borrowings were on fixed rates which should mitigate any rise in interest rates. Management has guided that it intends to hedge 65-75% of its borrowing going forward.

Share Price Drivers:

Better-than-expected performance at Suntec City Mall. Higher occupancy rates at Suntec City Mall, as well as better-than-expected rental reversions, present potential upside to our earnings estimates.

Recovery in the Singapore office market. Should office rents in Singapore recover as supply eases from 2018 onwards, this will likely translate into higher earnings for Suntec and likely lead to a re-rating of the stock.

Key Risks:

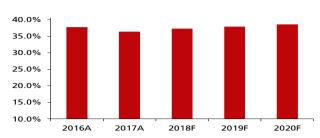
Turnaround of Suntec City Mall. We believe the turnaround of Suntec City Mall as it closes the large discount in rents to other suburban malls will drive Suntec's share price higher.

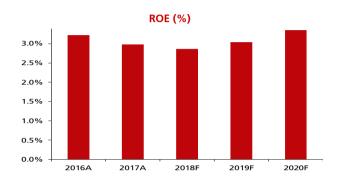
Multi-year recovery in office rents. In past upturns in office rents, office REITs traded at a premium to book. With expectations of easing new supply until 2022 and a pick-up in the Singapore economy, we believe we are at the start of a multi-year growth story. Thus, we believe the rally in Suntec's share price can continue despite its strong run in 2017.

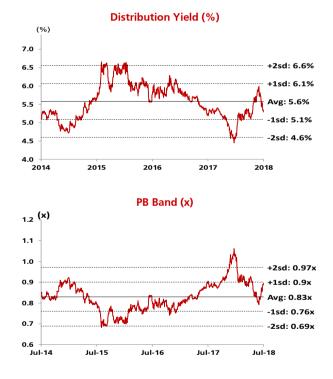
Company Background

Suntec REIT (Suntec) has a portfolio of office and retail properties in Singapore and Australia. Its most prominent asset is Suntec City, which comprises four office towers, a retail mall, and a convention centre, located close to the city area of Singapore.

Aggregate Leverage (%)

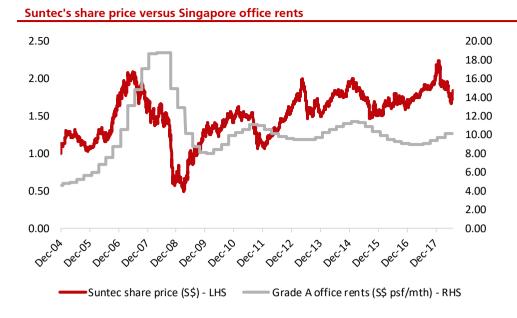






Source: Company, DBS Bank





Remarks

Suntec's share price performance is highly correlated with the performance of spot office rents and typically leads a recovery or downturn in spot rents by 6-12 months.

On anticipation of a recovery in the office market, we expect Suntec's share price to remain on an uptrend.

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P., CBRE, DBS Bank



Income Statement (S\$m)

FY Dec	2016A	2017A	2018F	2019F	2020F
Gross revenue	329	354	360	377	409
Property expenses	(104)	(110)	(118)	(120)	(131)
Net Property Income	225	244	242	256	279
Other Operating expenses	(49.8)	(51.0)	(53.1)	(53.9)	(55.2)
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(54.7)	(75.6)	(79.4)	(88.3)	(90.1)
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	(0.4)	(5.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Income	205	193	185	196	217
Tax	(14.2)	(18.3)	(14.0)	(15.7)	(17.7)
Minority Interest	(14.7)	(8.7)	(9.5)	(9.1)	(10.4)
Preference Dividend	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Income After Tax	176	166	161	171	189
Total Return	247	220	161	171	189
Non-tax deductible Items	(16.8)	13.7	107	100	85.3
Net Inc available for Dist.	254	263	268	271	274
Growth & Ratio					
Revenue Gth (%)	(0.3)	7.8	1.7	4.6	8.6
N Property Inc Gth (%)	(2.0)	8.9	(0.8)	5.8	8.7
Net Inc Gth (%)	(22.1)	(5.7)	(2.7)	6.0	10.4
Dist. Payout Ratio (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Net Prop Inc Margins (%)	68.3	69.0	67.3	68.1	68.1
Net Income Margins (%)	53.5	46.8	44.8	45.4	46.1
Dist to revenue (%)	77.2	74.3	74.4	71.9	66.9
Managers & Trustee's fees	15.1	14.4	14.7	14.3	13.5
ROAE (%)	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.4
ROA (%)	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.0
ROCE (%)	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.2
Int. Cover (x)	3.2	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.5
Source: Company, DBS Bank					

Driven mainly by the contribution of 177 Pacific Highway, Southgate and 477 Collins Street in Australia

Quarterly / Interim Income Statement (S\$m) 2

Quarterly / Interim Income FY Dec	2Q2017	3Q2017	4Q2017	1Q2018	2Q2018
	242017	542017	442017	142010	242010
Gross revenue	87.3	91.1	87.3	90.7	90.5
Property expenses	(27.9)	(27.3)	(28.0)	(27.7)	(29.8)
Net Property Income	59.4	63.9	59.4	63.0	60.7
Other Operating expenses	(12.7)	(12.8)	(12.5)	(12.7)	(13.0)
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(28.8)	(16.1)	(15.8)	(16.9)	(15.4)
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	0.30	3.27	(5.6)	12.5	0.14
Net Income	35.7	56.4	50.5	63.7	61.2
Tax	(1.2)	(1.5)	(11.8)	(1.7)	(1.8)
Minority Interest	(0.9)	(1.7)	(6.0)	(1.8)	(2.0)
Net Income after Tax	33.6	53.2	32.7	60.2	57.4
Total Return	33.6	53.2	87.3	60.2	57.4
Non-tax deductible Items	24.4	4.68	(28.0)	(1.9)	(1.4)
Net Inc available for Dist.	66.0	65.9	69.3	64.8	66.0
Growth & Ratio					
Revenue Gth (%)	(1)	4	(4)	4	0
N Property Inc Gth (%)	(4)	7	(7)	6	(4)
Net Inc Gth (%)	(27)	58	(39)	84	(5)
Net Prop Inc Margin (%)	68.1	70.1	68.0	69.4	67.1
Dist. Payout Ratio (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Balance Sheet (S\$m)					
FY Dec	2016A	2017A	2018F	2019F	2020F
	6.249	C 207	C 470		
Investment Properties	6,248	6,387	6,470	6,595	6,717
Other LT Assets Cash & ST Invts	2,648	2,663 173	2,838	2,838 90.2	2,838 69.9
	182 0.0		130 0.0	90.2 0.0	
Inventory Debtors	0.0 14.8	0.0 18.2	0.0 18.0	18.8	0.0 20.5
Other Current Assets	0.0	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24
Total Assets	9,093		9,456	9,542	
	9,095	9,242	9,450	9,542	9,645
ST Debt	99.8	237	237	237	237
Creditor	93.5	109	102	109	119
Other Current Liab	14.7	25.8	14.5	16.1	18.2
LT Debt	3,206	2,994	3,229	3,301	3,370
Other LT Liabilities	86.1	109	109	109	109
Unit holders' funds	5,469	5,639	5,627	5,623	5,635
Minority Interests	124	128	137	146	157
Total Funds & Liabilities	9,093	9,242	9,456	9,542	9,645
Non-Cash Wkg. Capital	(93.4)	(116)	(98.6)	(106)	(116)
Net Cash/(Debt)	(3,123)	(3,058)	(3,336)	(3,448)	(3,537)
Ratio	(5,125)	(3,050)	(3,330)	(3,770)	(3,337)
Current Ratio (x)	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2
Quick Ratio (x)	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2
Aggregate Leverage (%)	37.7	36.4	37.3	37.9	38.6
Z-Score (X)	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8
	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0

Gearing to creep up on announced acquisitions

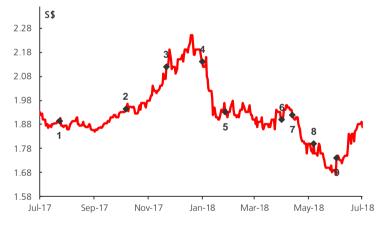
Source: Company, DBS Bank



Cash Flow Statement (S\$m)

FY Dec	2016A	2017A	2018F	2019F	2020F	
Pre-Tax Income	205	193	185	196	217	
Dep. & Amort.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Tax Paid	(3.7)	0.0	(25.4)	(14.0)	(15.7)	
Associates &JV Inc/(Loss)	(84.9)	(80.3)	(74.9)	(81.5)	(83.4)	
Chg in Wkg.Cap.	(9.5)	(5.0)	(6.3)	6.24	7.67	
Other Operating CF	91.1	119	72.5	74.4	75.2	
Net Operating CF	198	227	151	181	201	
Net Invt in Properties	(10.8)	(61.5)	(82.7)	(125)	(121)	
Other Invts (net)	0.0	0.0	0.0 🔪	0.0	0.0	Acquisition of
Invts in Assoc. & JV	(285)	(21.4)	(175)		0.0	additional 25% interest
Div from Assoc. & JVs	64.7	71.8	74.9	81.5	83.4	in Southgate
Other Investing CF	19.9	16.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Net Investing CF	(212)	5.76	(182)	(43.9)	(38.0)	
Distribution Paid	(257)	(257)	(268)	(271)	(274)	
Chg in Gross Debt	99.3	103	257	94.0	91.1	
New units issued	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Other Financing CF	(91.4)	(88.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Net Financing CF	(249)	(242)	(10.6)	(177)	(183)	
Currency Adjustments	0.36	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Chg in Cash	(263)	(9.8)	(42.3)	(40.1)	(20.4)	
Operating CFPS (S cts)	8.16	8.89	5.86	6.44	7.04	
Free CFPS (S cts)	7.37	6.34	2.54	2.05	2.89	
Source: Company, DBS Bank						

Target Price & Ratings History



Note : Share price and Target price are adjusted for corporate actions.

Source: DBS Bank Analyst: Mervin SONG, CFA

Derek TAN

S.No.	Date of Report	Closing Price	12-mth Target Price	Rating
1:	16 Aug 17	1.90	1.95	HOLD
2:	30 Oct 17	1.95	1.95	HOLD
3:	15 Dec 17	2.12	2.30	BUY
4:	25 Jan 18	2.14	2.30	BUY
5:	20 Feb 18	1.93	2.30	BUY
6:	25 Apr 18	1.90	2.30	BUY
7:	07 May 18	1.92	2.30	BUY
8:	31 May 18	1.80	2.30	BUY
9:	26 Jun 18	1.74	2.30	BUY



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Share price appreciation + dividends

Completed Date: 26 Jul 2018 08:31:06 (SGT) Dissemination Date: 26 Jul 2018 08:52:18 (SGT)

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