

Singapore Company Update

18 September 2024

Industrials | Aerospace & Defence

ST Engineering (STE SP)

Rolling Forward Our Valuation; Reiterate BUY

- Reiterate BUY, new SGD5.32 TP from SGD5, 15% upside, and c.3.5% yield.
 We roll forward our valuation to FY25F. ST Engineering's share price has outperformed the STI and we expect this outperformance to continue as it remains well positioned to deliver 15% profit CAGR and steady dividends during 2023-2026. This earnings growth will be aided by strong demand for aviation MRO services and a potential recovery in the Urban Solution & Satcom (USS) segment. We see further earnings tailwind from the impending interest rate decline, as c.39% of its debt is exposed to floating interest rates.
- Expect earnings growth momentum to continue. We expect the strong earnings growth reported by STE in 1H24 to continue due to continuing demand for aviation MRO work, which will boost the Commercial Aerospace business in our view. Because of strike action, Boeing's operations have been impacted, and we believe this could make the shortage of jetliners worse worldwide and force airlines to keep using older aircraft for longer. This would, in general, mean more work for both airframe and engine MRO service providers. We also expect higher aircraft engine nacelle deliveries. Airbus expects its A320 production rate to exceed the 45 aircraft per month deliveries achieved in 2023. With improving scale, we also expect STE's passenger-to-freighter or PTF conversions to see better margins in 2H24. While the USS numbers were below our expectations in 1H24, we maintain that STE's focus on improving processes and optimising costs should boost EBIT. We expect growth in the Defence & Public Security or DPS segment to sustain, as the group continues to deliver the orderbook.
- Potential for lower interest costs. During its 1H24 results announcement, STE had noted that it estimates the 2024 weighted average borrowing costs at 3.7% (our estimate: 3.5%), assuming no US Federal Reserve rate cuts in 2024. Amidst our expectations of two rate cuts in 2H24, and additional rate cuts in 2025, we see a possibility of lower interest costs in 2025 (not in our estimates yet), which could further boost earnings. This is because 39% of STE's debt remains exposed to a floating interest rate.
- High orderbook and strong visibility to 2H24 revenue. STE reported a record order backlog of SGD27.9bn as at end June, implying a book-to-bill ratio of 2.8 years. It estimates SGD4.9bn of the orders will be delivered in 2H24, which accounts for c.90% of our 2H24 revenue estimate.
- **ESG premium.** We continue to derive our TP using an average of P/E, P/BV, EV/EBITDA, and DCF. Our TP includes a 4% ESG premium over the fair value of SGD5.11, given its 3.3 ESG score vs 3.1 country median.

Forecasts and Valuation	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Total turnover (SGDm)	9,035	10,101	10,876	11,715	12,644
Recurring net profit (SGDm)	482	612	713	840	926
Recurring net profit growth (%)	(15.5)	26.9	16.6	17.7	10.3
Recurring P/E (x)	29.97	23.61	20.26	17.21	15.60
P/B (x)	6.0	5.9	5.4	4.8	4.2
P/CF (x)	21.46	12.26	11.08	9.78	10.00
Dividend Yield (%)	4.7	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4
EV/EBITDA (x)	17.47	14.83	13.37	11.78	10.85
Return on average equity (%)	22.2	24.1	27.8	29.5	28.7
Net debt to equity (%)	223.6	209.1	192.1	159.1	127.9

Source: Company data, RHB

Buy (Maintained)

Target Price (Return): SGD5.32 (14.5%)
Price (Market Cap): SGD4.64 (USD11,185m)
ESG score: 3.3 (out of 4)
Avg Daily Turnover (SGD/USD) 20.9m/15.7m

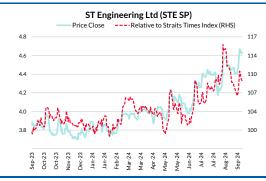
Analyst

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Share Performance (%)

	YTD	1m	3m	6m	12m
Absolute	19.3	1.8	16.6	17.8	18.1
Relative	8.4	(5.4)	7.6	4.5	8.6
52-wk Price low	/high (S	GD)		3.70	-4.67



Source: Bloomberg

Overall ESG Score: 3.3 (out of 4)

E: GOOD

In 2023, it reported a 36% reduction in absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions over the 2010 base year and is on track to meet its target of achieving a 50% reduction in absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030 compared to the 2010 base year.

S: EXCELLENT

STE serves its communities through a combination of volunteer work and skills-based contributions, as well as in kind and monetary support. In 2023, it contributed SGD2.3m to community causes. STE promotes the professional and personal development of its employees, as seen by the increase in the average number of training hours per employee.

G: EXCELLENT

Despite having exposure to the defence business, STE does not design, produce, or sell anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions, white phosphorus munitions, or their related key components. STE's board comprises 13 directors, of whom seven are independent (54%), and three are female (23%).



Financial Exhibits

Singapore
Industrials
ST Engineering
STE SP
Rusy

Asia

Valuation basis

Our TP is derived by using an average of forward P/E, P/BV, EV/EBITDA, and DCF of adjusted free cash flows.

Key drivers

- New order wins and continuing delivery of order book;
- $ii. \ \ Sustained improvement in global \ aviation \ market;$
- iii. Contributions from acquisitions.

Key risks

- i. Slower revival in commercial aerospace sector;
- ii. Lower margin from higher costs caused by supply chain issues;
- iii. Delays in the delivery of order book;
- iv. Lower-than-expected contributions from acquisitions.

Company Profile

ST Engineering is an integrated engineering group in the Commercial Aerospace (CA), Urban Solutions & Satcom (USS), and Defence & Public Security (DPS) sectors. The company has over the years, diversified its businesses and geographical coverage.

Financial summary (SGD)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Recurring EPS	0.15	0.20	0.23	0.27	0.30
DPS	0.22	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16
BVPS	0.77	0.79	0.85	0.96	1.10
Return on average equity (%)	22.2	24.1	27.8	29.5	28.7

Valuation metrics	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Recurring P/E (x)	29.97	23.61	20.26	17.21	15.60
P/B (x)	6.0	5.9	5.4	4.8	4.2
FCF Yield (%)	(0.5)	6.2	4.5	7.1	7.4
Dividend Yield (%)	4.7	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4
EV/EBITDA (x)	17.47	14.83	13.37	11.78	10.85
EV/EBIT (x)	31.05	24.39	21.11	18.18	16.62

Income statement (SGDm)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Total turnover	9,035	10,101	10,876	11,715	12,644
Gross profit	1,699	1,973	2,215	2,446	2,630
EBITDA	1,181	1,382	1,531	1,705	1,812
Depreciation and amortisation	(517)	(541)	(562)	(600)	(629)
Operating profit	665	840	970	1,105	1,183
Net interest	(138)	(210)	(209)	(203)	(189)
Pre-tax profit	597	704	875	1,030	1,137
Taxation	(54)	(100)	(140)	(165)	(182)
Reported net profit	535	586	713	840	926
Recurring net profit	482	612	713	840	926

Cash flow (SGDm)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Change in working capital	(442)	(101)	(205)	(192)	(332)
Cash flow from operations	673	1,179	1,304	1,478	1,445
Capex	(743)	(279)	(650)	(450)	(380)
Cash flow from investing activities	(4,571)	(201)	(582)	(371)	(290)
Dividends paid	(686)	(499)	(498)	(498)	(498)
Cash flow from financing activities	3,698	(1,226)	(810)	(1,003)	(1,091)
Cash at beginning of period	816	602	353	265	368
Net change in cash	(201)	(248)	(89)	104	64
Ending balance cash	602	353	265	368	432

Balance sheet (SGDm)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Total cash and equivalents	602	353	265	368	432
Tangible fixed assets	2,076	2,076	2,358	2,401	2,344
Total investments	468	567	499	421	331
Total assets	14,964	15,379	15,609	15,775	15,822
Short-term debt	3,628	2,564	0	0	0
Total long-term debt	2,907	3,544	6,008	5,708	5,308
Total liabilities	12,311	12,627	12,620	12,419	12,010
Total equity	2,653	2,752	2,989	3,356	3,813
Total liabilities & equity	14,964	15,379	15,609	15,775	15,822

Key metrics	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Revenue growth (%)	17.4	11.8	7.7	7.7	7.9
Recurrent EPS growth (%)	(15.5)	26.9	16.5	17.7	10.3
Gross margin (%)	18.8	19.5	20.4	20.9	20.8
Operating EBITDA margin (%)	13.1	13.7	14.1	14.6	14.3
Net profit margin (%)	5.9	5.8	6.6	7.2	7.3
Dividend payout ratio (%)	128.2	85.0	69.9	59.3	53.8
Capex/sales (%)	8.2	2.8	6.0	3.8	3.0
Interest cover (x)	4.47	3.34	4.40	5.16	5.83

Source: Company data, RHB



Emissions And ESG

Trend	ana	VSIS

Although overall emissions have been on the rise on the back of rising economic output, during 2020–2023, STE has reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) intensity as a measure of revenue for its Singapore operations to 10.99 tCO2e/SGDm in 2023 from 16.34 tCO2e/SGDm in 2020 and 14.82 tCO2e/SGDm in 2021.

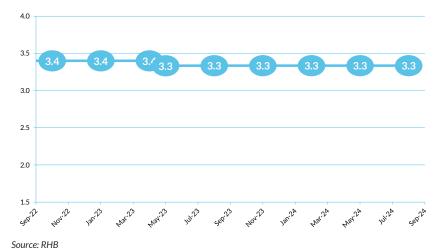
Emissions (tCO2e)	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23
Scope 1	36,000	39,000	37,000
Scope 2	78,000	71,000	74,000
Scope 3	1,900	33,000	39,000
Total emissions	115,900	143,000	150,000

Source: Company data, RHB

Latest ESG-Related Developments

- In 2021, STE set a target to halve its absolute Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions by 2030 compared to a 2010 base year. In the same year, it also set a target to increase its sustainability linked revenue to more than SGD3bn by 2026.
- In 2022, STE was included in the Dow Jones Sustainability Asia Pacific Index as identified by S&P Global through the Corporate Sustainability Assessment. It is also a component stock of the iEdge SG ESG Transparency Index and the iEdge SG ESG Leaders Index.
- In 2023, STE implemented an internal shadow carbon price on major capital expenditure, established roadmaps, and embarked on the development of a product carbon footprint for its major products and services.

ESG Rating History



Recommendation Chart



Sep-19 Mar-20 Sep-20 Mar-21 Sep-21 Mar-22 Sep-22 Mar-23 Sep-23 Mar-24

Source: RHB, Bloomberg

Date	Recommendation	Target Price	Price
2024-07-21	Buy	5.00	4.45
2024-04-08	Buy	4.50	3.98
2024-03-04	Buy	4.50	3.95
2024-02-21	Buy	4.50	3.92
2023-10-23	Buy	4.45	3.75
2023-10-09	Buy	4.45	3.81
2023-08-14	Buy	4.50	3.85
2023-08-02	Buy	4.25	3.70
2023-05-08	Buy	4.05	3.65
2023-02-27	Buy	4.10	3.54
2023-01-18	Buy	4.15	3.45
2022-11-08	Buy	4.15	3.33
2022-10-11	Buy	4.10	3.34
2022-09-23	Buy	4.60	3.66
2022-08-15	Buy	4.60	4.00

Source: RHB, Bloomberg



RHB Guide to Investment Ratings

Buy: Share price may exceed 10% over the next 12 months

Trading Buy: Share price may exceed 15% over the next 3 months, however longer-

term outlook remains uncertain

Neutral: Share price may fall within the range of +/- 10% over the next

12 months

Take Profit: Target price has been attained. Look to accumulate at lower levels Sell: Share price may fall by more than 10% over the next 12 months

Not Rated: Stock is not within regular research coverage

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