

# **Pioneer Credit Limited**

# Return to profitable growth

Pioneer Credit Limited (ASX:PNC) was founded in 2009 and listed on the ASX in 2014. The company has grown to be one of the leading acquirers and managers of impaired credit in Australia by maintaining strong customer engagement, an unblemished compliance record with ASIC and strong relationships with Australia's largest bank and non-bank lenders. PNC currently purchases debt from 18 different vendor partners with long-term partnership purchasing arrangements in place with Commonwealth Bank of Australia (ASX:CBA). A change to Australian Accounting Standards in 2019 and subsequent audit uncertainty resulted in significant corporate disruption. COVID compounded this in 2020 and 2021 with fewer PDPs available due to loan deferrals. PNC has returned to a normal environment in FY2023 and beyond, as a tightening economy with full employment provides a more certain outlook for purchase of PDPs and profitability. The company additionally expects to refinance a portion of the current debt facility in calendar 2023 Pioneer has reported a strong, as expected, FY23 result with a confident outlook for FY24 and FY25 post refinancing. Returning to "normal" interest rates of 7%-9% would have reduced interest payments in FY23 by between \$6m and \$12m over the year. We maintain our valuation at \$177m or \$1.58 per share.

#### **Business model**

Pioneer Credit Limited acquires and manages performing and non-performing consumer debt portfolios (PDPs). The company acquires portfolios of defaulted consumer (non-mortgage) debts from the "Big Four" banks and other credit providers. PNC generates revenue by recovering the debts via contacting the debtors and negotiating payment arrangements or settlements. The company borrows at a margin over bank bills to fund purchases of PDPs, paying a discounted face value typically less than \$0.20/\$ of debt. Profit then depends on ethical and efficient management of the debtor/customer and accurate assessment of the credit risk inherent in the debtor profile.

### Result sets the stage for refinancing

The FY23 result presentation again highlighted that an outlook of full employment, a higher cost of living and catch-up of loan deferrals are expected to leave higher numbers of consumers in distress but still able to restructure debt payments. PNC reported NPAT of \$0.2m following a (\$33.1m) net loss in FY22. Total income increased 52% and finance expenses fell 14%. When PNC refinances on more favourable terms in H1 FY24 we expect margins to improve as highlighted by management examples of possible savings from lower finance costs. (Note for this result we present statutory accounts as per the result presentation rather than management accounts in our <u>Initiation Report</u>.)

## Valuation base case at \$177m (\$1.58/share)

We leave our valuation unchanged following a result in-line with expectations. Our valuation is based on the discounted cashflow methodology using a discount rate of 16.5% (beta 2.0, risk-free rate 3.5%). We have modelled three cases mainly differentiated by finance margin, PDP price and cash collection performance and including a cyclical component in our estimates. Our base-case valuation is \$177m or \$1.58/share. Our downside case values PNC at \$146m (\$1.30/share), while we can estimate upside to \$236m (\$2.11/share) using a range of more positive factors. Finance interest margin and cash collection performance are the crucial determinants of value. In our view, PNC is receiving no credit for the turnaround in FY23 to date nor for the improved outlook for FY2024 and beyond.

Historical earnings and RaaS estimates (in A\$m unless otherwise stated)										
Year end	Revenue	EBITDA Stat.	EBIT Stat.	NPAT	EPS (c)	P/E (x)	Price / Book (x)			
06/22a	62.6	8.9	6.1	(33.1)	(29.2)	n.a.	7.5			
06/23e	73.7	36.2	34.0	0.2	0.2	229.1	7.8			
06/24e	89.6	41.1	37.6	3.5	3.1	11.2	8.2			
06/25e	91.2	40.7	37.3	11.4	10.2	3.4	7.8			

Source: Company data; statutory presentation, RaaS estimates for FY24f and FY25f

#### Financial Services

### 4 September 2023



#### **Share Performance (12 months)**



#### Upside Case

- PNC retains strong relationships with major banks based on quality of results
- Prices for debt portfolios weaken as majors high-grade their portfolios
- PNC refinances successfully at lower margins over BBSY bill rates

#### **Downside Case**

- Portfolio performance weakens more than expected as financial stress increases
- Banks do not sell more debt portfolios as credit growth slows
- Borrowing interest rates remain higher for longer

#### **Company Interview**

#### Pioneer Credit RaaS Interview 4 Sept 2023

## **Board and Management**

St	teve Targett	Non-Executive Chairman
Р	eter Hall	Non-Executive Director
Sı	usan Pervan	Non-Executive Director
Pa	auline Gately	Non-Executive Director
K	eith John	Managing Director
В	arry Hartnett	Chief Financial Officer
Sı	ue Symmons	Co Sec/General Counsel

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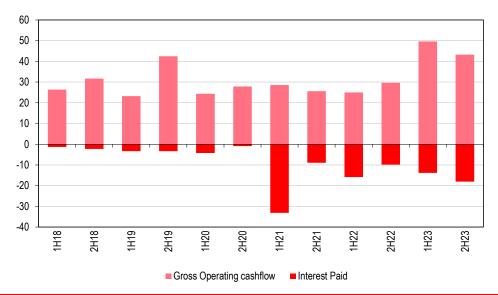
finola.burke@raasgroup.com



## **FY23** Results Analysis

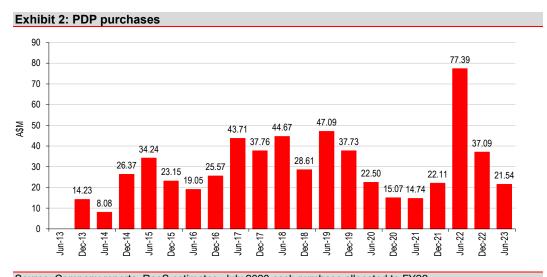
Pioneer has generated strong gross cashflows throughout the COVID-19 affected period with a significant increase in FY23 as portfolio sales normalised post-pandemic. The impact of re-financing on interest paid is readily apparent in 1H21 and thereafter. Gross cashflow rose +70% in FY23 versus FY22 driven by increased acquisition of PDPs (Purchased Debt Portfolios) in FY22. The company is not guiding toward larger purchases in FY24 (\$60m target) but we expect that refinancing will drive another improvement in cashflow in the next year.

Exhibit 1: Gross operating cashflow and Interest payments



#### Source: Company reports

We allocate \$22.4m of PDPs purchased in late June 2022 and paid for in FY23 to the FY22 year in the chart below. Pioneer guided toward \$60m in purchases again in FY24 and has 58% under contract to date. The company has a forward flow agreement in place with CBA until 2027 and agreements in place with 12 other vendors. We note an apparent decline in competition in the PDP market and PNC's premium position as a preferred purchaser for non-bank financiers who prefer to sell to non-competing purchasers.

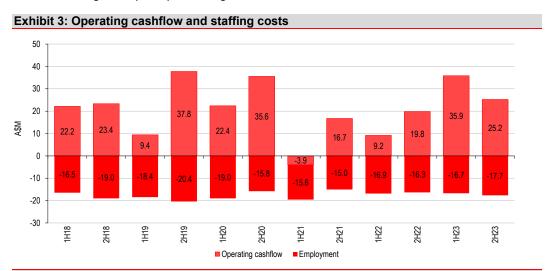


Source: Company reports, RaaS estimates, July 2023 cash purchase allocated to FY22

PDP investment for the FY23 year was \$59.2m versus the total in FY22 of \$99.5m.



Apart from interest expense Pioneer's major cost is staffing which, after a reduction in FY20, has remained relatively stable through the past few years. We expect PNC's compliance and reporting IT upgrade project to enable continuing stability. Full-year staffing costs rose 4%.



Source: Company reports, RaaS estimates

We present the statutory result below (Exhibit 4) showing net income from PDPs and a consequent EBITDA of \$36.2m up +307%. Management accounts (Exhibit 5) use gross PDP income with amortisation and impairment of PDPs separated, resulting in an EBITDA calculation of \$91.3m (or \$86.1m normalised for remediation payments). We have presented our analysis based on statutory accounts given management's results presentation emphasised the statutory result. In any case income and profit gains are very large relative to FY22.

Exhibit 4. Front & Loss – aujt	ibit 4: Profit & Loss – adjusted statutory presentation, \$'000								
	FY22	FY23	YoY change %						
PDP Interest income	62,574	73,709	18						
Net impairment (loss) on PDPs	(8,913)	3,767							
Other income	653	5,261							
Total income	54,314	82,737	52						
Employee expenses	(33,176)	(34,365)	4						
Direct liquidation expenses	(2,691)	(3,572)	33						
Information tech and comms	(3,490)	(3,456)	-1						
Consultancy and professional fees	(2,503)	(1,741)	-30						
Other expenses	(3,549)	(3,365)	-5						
EBITDA (Statutory)	8,905	36,238	307						
Depreciation and amortisation	(2,822)	(2,229)	-21						
Fair value adjustments	0	0							
Gain on lease modification	7	0							
EBIT	6,090	34,009	458						
Finance expenses	(39,131)	(33,839)	-14						
(Loss) / Profit before income tax	(33,041)	170							
Income tax (expense)/benefit	(53)	(4)							
(Loss) / Profit after tax	(33,094)	166							
Source: Company accounts	·								



	FY22	FY23	YoY change %
sh collections	106,752	132,600	24
ner income	605	5,261	
I revenue	107,357	137,861	28
penses	(46,775)	(46,499)	-1
TDA (Management Accounts)	60,581	91,362	51
P amortisation charge and impairment	(53,078)	(55,124)	4
preciation and amortisation	(955)	(2,229)	133
nortisation of leases	(3,184)	•	
Г	3,365	34,009	911
t interest expense	(36,403)	(33,839)	-7
Profit/(Loss) before Tax	(33,038)	170	
x (expense) benefit	(53)	(4)	-92
Profit/(Loss) after Tax	(33,091)	166	
Profit/(Loss) after Tax rce: Company accounts, RaaS estimat	· · · · · · ·	166	

## **Key Events In The Year**

### Events in the year included:

- A return to profitability as guided in August 2022 with NPAT +\$0.2m (FY22 -\$33.1m);
- Record cash collections from PDPs of \$132.6m (+24% relative to FY22 \$106.8m);
- +42% increase in management EBITDA to \$86.1m;
- Portfolio performance measures all strong;
- Commenced refinancing process with significant potential gains from interest rate reduction (see below); and
- Board and management refreshed with new CIO and two new directors.

## **Finance**

Pioneer commenced a refinancing process to reduce funding costs. Management provided a sensitivity table based on FY23 illustrating the potential gains from a normalisation of the current relatively punitive arrangement - in place due to covenant breaches in FY20 following an Accounting Standard change noted previously. The business was financed at rates between 4.0% and 4.5% prior to COVID-19.

Exhibit 6: FY23 sensitivity to interest rate reduction									
"All in" Interest rate	Interest expense	Incremental cash	Cash balance						
12.83% - Current	(\$31.1m)	-	\$8.4m						
10.0%	(\$27.1m)	\$4.0m	\$12.4m						
9.0%	(\$24.4m)	\$6.7m	\$15.1m						
8.0%	(\$21.7m)	\$9.4m	\$17.8m						
7.0%	(\$19.0m)	\$12.1m	\$20.5m						
Source: Company data									



Exhibit 7 Financial Sum	ımarv
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Pioneer Credit Ltd						Share price (Date)	1/09/2023				A\$	0.350
Profit and Loss (A\$m)						Interim (A\$m)	1H23 A	2H23 A	1H24 F	2H24 F	1H25 F	2H25 F
Y/E 30 June	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24F	FY25F	Revenue	36.3	37.4	43.0	46.6	45.1	46.1
						EBITDA	15.7	20.6	19.1	22.0	19.7	21.0
Sales Revenue	57.0	62.6	73.7	89.6	91.2	EBIT	14.6	19.5	17.5	20.1	18.1	19.2
Other net income	(3.6)	(8.3)	9.0	0.0	0.0	NPAT (normalised)	(1.2)	1.4	0.7	2.8	5.0	6.4
EBITDA	11.2	8.9	36.2	41.1	40.7	Minorities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depn	(3.3)	(2.1)	(2.0)	(3.3)	(3.2)	NPAT (reported)	(1.2)	1.4	0.7	2.8	5.0	6.4
Amort	(0.5)	(0.7)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)	EPS (normalised)	(1.16)	1.33	0.63	2.48	4.47	5.72
EBIT	7.4	6.1	34.0	37.6	37.3	EPS (reported)	(1.11)	1.26	0.63	2.48	4.47	5.72
Finance Costs	(26.7)	(39.1)	(33.8)	(32.6)	(21.0)	Dividend (cps)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tax	(2.8)	(0.1)	(0.0)	(1.5)	(4.9)	Imputation	30	30	30	30	30	30
Minorities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Operating cash flow	35.9	25.2	24.1	28.4	30.7	33.4
Equity accounted assoc	0.0	0.0	(3.8)	0.0	0.0	Free Cash flow	35.9	25.2	24.1	28.4	30.7	33.4
NPAT pre significant item	(22.1)	(33.1)	0.2	3.5	11.4	Divisions	1H23 A	2H23 A	1H24 F	2H24 F	1H25 F	2H25 F
Significant items	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	PNC trades as a single op	erational entit	у				
NPAT (reported)	(22.1)	(33.1)	0.2	3.5	11.4	Revenue	36.3	37.4	43.0	46.6	45.1	46.1
Cash flow (A\$m)						COGS	(3.9)	(2.8)	(4.1)	(4.3)	(4.5)	(4.6)
Y/E 30 June	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24F	FY25F	Employ ment	(16.7)	(17.7)	(17.4)	(17.9)	(18.4)	(17.9)
Cash Collections	95.4	106.8	135.0	133.5	135.5	Other costs	(2.2)	(2.2)	(2.3)	(2.4)	(2.5)	(2.6)
EBITDA	11.2	8.9	36.2	41.1	40.7							
Interest	(42.0)	(25.7)	(31.8)	(32.6)	(21.0)	EBITDA	15.7	20.6	19.1	22.0	19.7	21.0
Tax	0.6	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	0.0							
Operating cash flow	12.8	29.0	61.1	52.4	64.1							
Mtce capex	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0							
Free cash flow	12.8	29.0	61.1	52.4	64.1							
Growth capex	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0							
Acquisitions/Disposals	(29.8)	(75.8)	(81.5)	(60.0)	(45.0)	Margins, Leverage, Return	s	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24F	FY25F
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	EBITDA		20%	14%	49%	46%	45%
Cash flow pre financing	(17.0)	(46.8)	(20.5)	(7.6)	19.1	EBIT		13%	10%	46%	42%	41%
Equity	(0.7)	10.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	NPAT pre significant items		n.a.	n.a.	0.2%	3.9%	12.5%
Debt	24.7	56.8	5.8	12.0	(20.0)	Net Debt (Cash)		194.0	242.7	266.2	283.0	264.8
Dividends paid	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Net debt/EBITDA (x)	(x)	17.4	27.2	7.3	6.9	6.5
Net cash flow for year	7.0	20.2	(14.7)	4.4	(0.9)	ND/ND+Equity (%)	(%)	139%	120%	119%	119%	127.3%
Balance sheet (A\$m)						EBIT interest cover (x)	(x)	3.6	6.4	1.0	0.9	0.6
Y/E 30 June	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24F	FY25F	ROA			2%	10%	11%	11%
Cash	10.4	23.1	8.4	10.8	9.1	ROE			(69%)	0%	8%	22%
Accounts receivable	0.9	6.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	ROIC			(12%)	0%	1%	4%
Purchased Debt Portfolio	73.4	96.3	106.1	111.7	111.9	NTA (per share)		0.65	0.38	0.37	0.40	0.50
Other current assets	3.1	4.5	4.0	6.4	0.0	Working capital		69.5	73.2	101.4	106.8	105.1
Total current assets	87.8	130.0	120.0	130.4	122.5	WC/Sales (%)		122%	117%	138%	119%	115%
PPE	5.3	9.3	8.1	9.0	9.9	Revenue growth		n.a.	10%	18%	22%	2%
Intangibles and Goodwill	1.6	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	EBIT growth pa		n.a.	-17%	456%	10%	-1%
Purchased Debt Portfolio	175.7	199.2	198.2	208.7	209.1	Pricing		FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24F	FY25F
Deferred tax asset	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	No of shares (y/e)	(m)	81	107	112	112	112
Other non current assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Weighted Av Dil Shares	(m)	59	113	107	112	112
Total non current assets	182.5	209.4	206.8	218.2	219.5							
Total Assets	270.3	339.5	326.8	348.6	342.0	EPS Reported	cps	(27.1)	(31.0)	0.2	3.1	10.2
Accounts payable	4.8	29.2	6.2	6.4	8.3	EPS Normalised/Diluted	cps	(37.4)	(29.2)	0.2	3.1	10.2
Short term debt	0.4	20.4	11.3	16.0	14.8	EPS growth (norm/dil)		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1940%	227%
Tax payable	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	DPS	cps	-	-	-	-	-
Other current liabilities	6.4	3.4	3.2	3.0	3.0	DPS Growth	-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total current liabilities	11.7	53.0	20.7	25.3	26.1	Dividend yield		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Long term debt	204.0	245.4	263.3	277.9	259.0	Dividend imputation		30	30	30	30	30
Other non current liabs	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	PE (x)		n.a.	n.a.	229.1	11.2	3.4
Total long term liabilities	204.0	245.4	264.1	277.9	259.0	PE market		14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5
Total Liabilities	215.7	298.4	284.8	303.2	285.1	Premium/(discount)		n.a.	n.a.	1480%	(23%)	(76%)
Net Assets	54.7	41.1	41.9	45.4	56.8	EV/EBITDA		19.9	31.4	8.4	7.8	7.5
				***		FCF/Share	cps	71.2	12.0	25.9	54.6	46.8
Share capital	93.6	113.1	113.8	113.8	113.8	Price/FCF share		0.5	2.9	1.4	0.6	0.7
Accumulated profits/losse		0.0	0.0	3.5	14.9	Free Cash flow Yield		203.4%	34.3%	74.0%	155.9%	133.8%
Reserves	(39.0)	(72.1)	(71.9)	(71.9)	(71.9)			. 2 / 0				
Minorities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0							
Total Shareholder func		41.1	41.9	45.4	56.8							
						recentation						

Source: Company data for actuals; RaaS analysis, Statutory presentation



# FINANCIAL SERVICES GUIDE

RaaS Advisory Pty Ltd

ABN 99 614 783 363

Corporate Authorised Representative, number 1248415

of

BR SECURITIES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

ABN 92 168 734 530

AFSL 456663

Effective Date: 6th May 2021



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- our services
- how we transact with you
- how we are paid, and
- complaint processes

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authorised to

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  - Securities
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