

Arch Capital

Robust MI and Reinsurance Margins Drive 4Q Results

ACGL's results were robust, with upside in EPS and strong business trends. We consider ACGL a premier franchise, but are Neutral on the stock due to valuation.

- Sizable EPS beat.** Operating EPS of \$2.14 was well above our \$1.40 estimate and consensus of \$1.33. The upside to our model was driven partly by more favorable PYD (+\$0.30 variance) and lower cat losses (+\$0.10 variance), but EPS would have still exceeded forecasts, helped by robust investment income and slightly better than assumed core margins (ex. cats and PYD). Premiums benefited from a few non-recurring deals, which did not affect income.
- Business trends were strong overall.** MI results were especially robust, marked by weak written premiums (-5%, close to our assumption) but strong margins (CR -27.1% vs. our 6.2% estimate and CR ex. cats and PYD 45.0% vs. 41.2%E). While pleased with results, we do not expect MI margins and earnings to sustain at the 4Q22 level. P&C insurance results were better than expected as well, with strong premium growth (+17%, slightly below our +22% assumption) and upside in margins on both a reported and core basis (CR 92.1% vs. 92.6%E; CR ex. cats and PYD 89.6% vs. 91.3%E). Similarly, P&C reinsurance margins were robust (CR 78.5% vs. 85.6%E; CR ex. cats and PYD 83.0% vs. 83.6%E). Reinsurance written premiums more than doubled on a reported basis, but increased 61% ex. non-recurring specialty transactions, considerably above our +13% assumption. Investment income benefited from the rise in interest rates. As expected, ACGL did not repurchase stock in 4Q22.
- We project ACGL to report robust results in the near term, but our long-term fundamental outlook is mixed.** In our view, ACGL's results in the next few quarters will be marked by robust margins and top-line growth in the re-insurance business, strong margins in the MI division, and weak premium growth in MI. Longer term, margins in the MI business should stay healthy, but are likely to moderate considerably from recent levels, which have been boosted by reserve releases. A weaker housing market and higher unemployment pose risks to the MI business as well. Meanwhile, our long-term outlook for the P&C reinsurance market is cautious. ACGL is one of the best positioned carriers to benefit from the current hard market. However, we remain skeptical of sustained hard pricing and expect structural issues such as increased 3rd party participation, higher mobility of capital, and broker consolidation to bring additional capacity to the market. Arch has flexibility to supplement organic growth with repurchases, although we expect buybacks to be modest in the next year, partly due to the higher stock price.
- We affirm our Neutral rating.** We view Arch as a top-tier insurance franchise, but in relatively commoditized markets. Also, we feel that ACGL is among the best positioned carriers to take advantage of hard reinsurance pricing. On the other hand, our long-term outlook for the reinsurance market remains downbeat. Furthermore, we feel that ACGL's valuation is not too enticing considering the company's long-term ROE and growth profile.

Sources for: Style Exposure – J.P. Morgan Quantitative and Derivatives Strategy; all other tables are company data and J.P. Morgan estimates.

See page 15 for analyst certification and important disclosures.

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Neutral

ACGL, ACGL US

Price (13 Feb 23): \$65.25

Price Target (Dec-23): \$58.00

Insurance - Life & Nonlife

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Quarterly Forecasts (FYE Dec)

Adj. EPS (\$)	2022A	2023E	2024E
Q1	1.10	1.51	
Q2	1.34	1.43	
Q3	0.28	1.02	
Q4	2.14	1.35	
FY	4.87	5.31	5.63

Style Exposure

Quant Factors	Current		Hist %Rank (1=Top)			
	%Rank	6M	1Y	3Y	5Y	
Value	100	100	100	100	100	100
Growth	1	100	100	1	1	1
Momentum	100	1	1	1	1	1
Quality	1	1	1	1	1	100
Low Vol	1	1	100	1	1	1
ESGQ	12	12	13	91	91	98

4Q22 EPS: \$2.14A vs. \$1.40E

Positives

Reinsurance & insurance margins

MI margins

Negatives

MI accident year loss ratio

Bloomberg: JPMA Bhullar <GO>

Price Performance



Company Data

Shares O/S (mn)	370
52-week range (\$)	65.67-41.05
Market cap (\$ mn)	24,165.08
Exchange rate	1.00
Free float(%)	96.6%
3M - Avg daily vol (mn)	1.77
3M - Avg daily val (\$ mn)	108.1
Volatility (90 Day)	30
Index	S&P 500
BBG BUY HOLD SELL	10 2 0

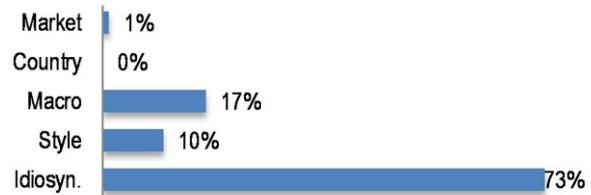
Key Metrics (FYE Dec)

\$ in millions	FY22A	FY23E	FY24E
Financial Estimates			
NEP (Premium)	9,678	11,091	12,254
Underwriting income	1,796	1,798	1,791
Net investment income	497	648	739
Operating income	2,293	2,446	2,529
Adj. PBT	1,562	2,193	2,280
Adj. net income	1,840	1,977	2,057
Adj. EPS	4.87	5.31	5.63
BBG EPS	4.06	5.58	6.35
DPS	0.00	0.00	0.00
Investments	12,106	13,583	14,640
BVPS	34.86	39.23	43.34
NAVPS	34.86	39.23	43.34
Margins and Growth			
Adj. EPS growth	36.0%	8.9%	6.0%
Ratios			
Adj. tax rate	5.1%	8.0%	8.0%
Loss ratio	(51.9%)	(53.1%)	(54.9%)
Combined ratio	(22.5%)	(22.4%)	(24.4%)
Invest inc. % of Investments	-	-	-
Regulatory solvency ratio	-	-	-
Leverage (Debt/Debt+Equity)	-	-	-
ROE	14.4%	14.5%	13.8%
Valuation			
Dividend yield	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Adj. P/E	13.4	12.3	11.6
P/BV	1.9	1.7	1.5

Summary Investment Thesis and Valuation

We consider Arch a premier franchise and expect it to generate higher and less volatile underwriting margins than most peers. However, we remain Neutral on the stock given a cautious long-term outlook for the P&C reinsurance market. In our view, near-term results in the MI business will benefit from reserve releases, while results in the P&C reinsurance business will be boosted by hard pricing and tighter terms/ conditions. However, our long-term outlook for ACGL's business is less upbeat. We expect MI returns to be held back by the commoditized nature of the product, black box pricing, and higher capital requirements. Moreover, we remain negative on the P&C reinsurance business and expect greater third-party participation, increased mobility of capital, and consolidation among brokers to preclude a prolonged hard market.

Performance Drivers



Factors	6M Corr	1Y Corr
Market: MSCI EM Latam	0.05	0.20
Country: Bermuda	-0.25	0.01
Macro:		
JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Div	0.23	0.32
JP Morgan EMBI Global Spread	-0.18	-0.29
JPM EM Currency(EMCI) Fixing	0.20	0.24
Quant Styles:		
Value	-0.29	-0.28
LowVol	0.32	0.20
DivYld	-0.22	-0.15

Source: J.P. Morgan Quantitative and Derivatives Strategy for Performance Drivers; company data, Bloomberg Finance L.P. and J.P. Morgan estimates for all other tables. Note: Price history may not be complete or exact.

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Investment Thesis

Please see Page 5 for a detailed review of 4Q22 results. ACGL will hold its earnings conference call at 11:00 AM Eastern on February 14, 2023. Conference call participants need to register at this link: <https://register.event.com/register/B108afe77d104845d98076df218af2df6a>. The call replay can be accessed at: ir.archcapgroup.com.

In our view, ACGL is a premier franchise that should benefit from near-term tailwinds in the reinsurance market, but we remain Neutral on valuation. We believe that ACGL has an industry-leading reinsurance business with a unique culture and approach to underwriting that we expect to drive superior returns and less volatile margins over time. In addition, Arch is a top competitor in the mortgage insurance (MI) market, which we view as structurally superior to reinsurance. In primary P&C, ACGL has gained share and expanded margins, helped by the favorable pricing environment. We expect ACGL's near-term results to benefit from reserve releases in the MI book and healthy re/insurance pricing. On the other hand, despite favorable conditions in the reinsurance market currently, our long-term outlook for the business remains cautious given structural headwinds such as low barriers to entry and limited pricing power. Lastly, ACGL's valuation is not enticing following its recent outperformance.

P&C Reinsurance: N-T Tailwinds, L-T Outlook Downbeat

Hard reinsurance pricing and tighter terms/conditions bode well for ACGL's results in the near term, but our long-term outlook for the market remains cautious. Arch has historically generated better, and less volatile, margins than most reinsurers, which we attribute to its focus on specialty reinsurance (where pricing tends to be less competitive), conservative underwriting philosophy, ability to shift target segments based on changing market conditions, and judicious management of cat risk. In particular, ACGL prices business using the risk-free rate (leading to more conservative underwriting) and uses a long-term compensation plan for underwriters that pays based on underwriting margins over a multi-year period. Also, the creation of 3rd party capital vehicles such as Premia Re has allowed Arch to earn fee income from its reinsurance franchise. We view Arch as a top-tier reinsurer and expect firmer reinsurance pricing to boost results through 2023. However, our long-term outlook for the reinsurance market remains cautious given its structural issues, including its commoditized nature, the ease of entry of new capital, and a broader set of capital providers (many, such as pension funds, that have lower return thresholds). As such, we are skeptical of a prolonged hard market. We believe that any signs of additional capacity entering the market would weigh on investor sentiment on reinsurance stocks, which have become consensus longs in recent months.

Mortgage Insurance: Growth to be Poor, Margins Healthy

ACGL expanded in mortgage insurance through acquisitions (CMG in 2014 and United Guaranty in 2016) during a time when market conditions were favorable, marked by appreciating home prices, relatively stringent lending standards at mortgage issuers, and disciplined pricing by mortgage insurers. The company's MI business has generated healthy margins since and, despite the temporary setback from COVID-related delinquencies in 2020, results have been strong overall. In our opinion, near-term MI results will benefit from reserve releases, particularly in 1H23, as more loans delinquent at the onset of the pandemic become current. On the other hand, higher interest rates will suppress mortgage origination volumes and although not imminent, a recession would increase defaults and pressure margins in the business.

4Q22 Details

This evening, ACGL announced 4Q22 operating EPS of \$2.14, well above our \$1.40 assumption and consensus of \$1.33. Compared with our model, underwriting income was better across all divisions (mortgage insurance, reinsurance, insurance) and investment income was significantly higher as well. The upside to our model was driven partly by higher than assumed favorable PYD (+\$0.30 variance per share) and lower cat losses (+\$0.10 variance), but earnings would have exceeded forecasts regardless, helped by robust investment income and slightly better than assumed core underwriting margins (ex. cats and PYD). While premiums benefited from a few non-recurring transactions in the reinsurance business, these did not contribute materially to income.

Table 1: 4Q22 Operating Earnings: Actual versus Expected

\$ in millions, except per share amounts

	4Q22E	4Q22A	Upside / (downside) to EPS	Comments
Underwriting Income by Division:				
Mortgage	272	374	\$0.27	margins (CR -27.1% vs. 6.2%E) benefited from elevated reserve release
Insurance	90	98	\$0.02	healthy margins (CR 92.1% vs. 92.6%E) and higher premiums drove beat
Reinsurance	141	263	\$0.33	margins (78.5% vs. 85.6%E) and premiums better than expected
Underwriting income	503	734	\$0.62	
Net investment income	134	181	\$0.13	pre-tax investment yield of 2.80% in 4Q22 vs. 2.06% in 3Q22 and 1.46% in 4Q21
Earnings from affiliates	20	36	\$0.04	
Other income (losses) / COLI	4	6	\$0.00	
Other expenses / corporate	48	44	\$0.01	
Interest expense	33	32	\$0.00	
Pretax operating income	580	882	\$0.81	
Income tax expense	46	66	-\$0.05	effective tax rate of 7.5% vs. assumed tax rate of 8.0%E
Preferred dividends	10	10	\$0.00	
Operating income	523	806	\$0.76	
Weighted average dilutive shares	373.9	375.9	-\$0.01	no share buybacks as expected
Operating EPS	\$1.40	\$2.14	\$0.74	no significant unusual items

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Business trends were strong. MI results were especially robust, marked by weak written premiums (-5%, close to our assumption) but strong margins (CR -27.1% vs. our 6.2% estimate and CR ex. cats and PYD 45.0% vs. 41.2%E). While pleased with results, which benefited from considerably higher than assumed favorable development, we do not expect MI margins and earnings to sustain at the 4Q22 level. P&C insurance results were better than expected as well, with strong premium growth (+17%, slightly below our +22% assumption) and upside in margins on both a reported and core basis (CR 92.1% vs. 92.6%E; CR ex. cats and PYD 89.6% vs. 91.3%E). Similarly, P&C reinsurance margins were robust (CR 78.5% vs. 85.6%E; CR ex. cats and PYD 83.0% vs. 83.6%E). Reinsurance written premiums more than doubled on a reported basis, but

increased 61% ex. non-recurring specialty transactions, considerably above our +13% assumption. Investment income benefited from the rise in interest rates. As expected, ACGL did not repurchase stock.

Table 2: 4Q22 Key Financial Metrics

\$ in millions

	4Q22E	4Q22A
Net premiums written	2,339	3,035
% change (y-o-y)	15.0%	49.2%
Net investment income	134	181
% change (y-o-y)	48.1%	100.2%
Loss ratio ex cats and PYD	51.7%	53.5%
Catastrophe losses	2.7%	1.3%
PYD (favorable) / unfavorable	-5.3%	-9.8%
Loss ratio	49.1%	45.0%
Expense ratio	30.8%	28.5%
Combined ratio	80.0%	73.5%
Combined ratio ex cats & PYD	82.5%	82.0%
Share buybacks (\$ mil.)	-	-

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Mortgage Insurance: Reserve Releases Boosted Earnings

We expect higher interest rates to suppress growth in the mortgage insurance (MI) business, and margins to compress from recent levels but remain healthy overall. The MI business reported underwriting income of \$374 million, well above our \$272 million estimate, driven by upside in margins (combined ratio of -27.1% versus our 6.2% estimate) and, to a lesser extent, higher than expected net earned premiums (-2.9% vs. decline of 5.6%E). As in recent quarters, earnings were lifted by the release of COVID-related reserves (-72.1% vs. -35.0%E ; \$211 million vs. \$100 million in dollar terms), which more than offset worse than assumed core margins (CR ex. cats and PYD 45.0% vs. 41.2%E). The lower core margin was driven by an uptick in the attritional loss ratio (25.2% vs. 21.0%E), partly reflecting higher default rates in 4Q22, which more than offset a lower expense ratio (19.8% vs. 20.2%E). Net written premiums declined 5.1% to \$275 million, close to our \$273 million forecast.

In 2020 and early 2021, MI margins were pressured by artificially high delinquencies caused by homeowners availing of government forbearance programs. However, after spiking initially in 2Q20, the number of delinquent loans has steadily declined, benefiting MI margins. With the expiry of the programs, a significant portion of previously delinquent loans has cured, particularly loans by borrowers who were taking advantage of the mortgage payment holiday but were not in financial stress. At the same time, the significant appreciation in house prices has provided a cushion to homeowners under stress who are truly struggling to pay their mortgages, limiting losses for MI carriers. The percent of loans in default in the U.S. primary MI business was 1.8% at 12/31/22, down from 2.4% at 12/31/21 but up from 1.7% at 9/30/22.

Table 3: Mortgage Insurance Key Metrics

\$ in millions

	4Q20	2020	1Q21	2Q21	3Q21	4Q21	2021	1Q22	2Q22	3Q22	4Q22E	4Q22A
Net written premiums	332	1,280	335	336	301	289	1,261	288	294	276	273	275
Premium Growth (y/y)	5.1%	1.4%	3.3%	3.3%	0.8%	-12.8%	-1.5%	-14.0%	-12.5%	-8.2%	-5.5%	-5.1%
Losses and LAE ex. cats and PYD	27.3%	39.2%	22.3%	16.1%	19.2%	14.8%	18.2%	17.6%	18.8%	21.0%	21.0%	25.2%
Catastrophe losses	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
PYD (favorable) / unfavorable	-2.4%	-1.4%	-3.4%	-13.1%	-15.5%	-24.2%	-13.7%	-36.5%	-40.7%	-45.1%	-35.0%	-72.1%
Loss ratio	24.9%	37.8%	18.9%	3.0%	3.7%	9.4%	4.4%	18.9%	21.9%	24.1%	14.0%	46.9%
Acquisition expense ratio	7.7%	9.6%	8.9%	9.0%	7.7%	4.4%	7.6%	3.6%	3.4%	2.4%	3.2%	4.4%
Operating expense ratio	12.5%	11.6%	14.6%	14.5%	14.8%	16.7%	15.1%	18.4%	17.0%	16.5%	17.0%	15.4%
Expense ratio	20.2%	21.2%	23.6%	23.5%	22.6%	21.1%	22.7%	22.1%	20.4%	18.8%	20.2%	19.8%
Combined ratio	45.1%	59.0%	42.4%	26.5%	26.3%	11.6%	27.1%	3.2%	-1.5%	-5.2%	6.2%	-27.1%
Combined ratio ex cats & PYD	47.5%	60.4%	45.8%	39.6%	41.8%	35.8%	40.9%	39.7%	39.2%	39.9%	41.2%	45.0%
Underwriting Income (Loss)	189	593	200	250	234	269	953	285	298	299	272	374

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

We expect MI margins to continue to benefit from reserve releases, but to a significantly lesser extent than in 2022. Under U.S. GAAP accounting, Arch sets reserves for its primary U.S. MI business based on reported delinquencies (unlike for P&C lines, an IBNR component is not permitted under U.S. GAAP for primary MI business). An increase in reported delinquencies at the onset of COVID led Arch and its

MI peers to establish corresponding reserves despite the healthy labor market and appreciation in house prices. However, a meaningful portion of these delinquencies arose from homeowners taking advantage of the government's forbearance protection programs (mainly to preserve liquidity), not actual financial hardship. As such, most of these delinquent loans have cured following the expiration of forbearance programs (initially set for 12/31/20, but then extended through 9/30/21 and, in some cases, year-end 2021 or beyond), resulting in the release of previously incurred reserves. The interplay of cures on previously delinquent loans and how new delinquencies emerge in response to the economic environment, which is beginning to soften, will be the key driver of MI margins through 2023. Overall, we project MI margins to remain healthy given strong labor and housing markets, cures on previously delinquent loans, and the equity cushion accumulated by homeowners due to the appreciation in house prices. On a cautious note, top-line growth in the business is likely to be weak as higher interest rates reduce mortgage originations. Also, a weaker economy could deflate home prices and lead to higher defaults on mortgages, particularly among borrowers that have weaker credit profiles, although a material increase in losses seems unlikely in the near term. Barring a recession, we expect core margins to stay healthy, but a declining tailwind from reserve releases should suppress reported margins in the MI division even if economic trends stay favorable.

ACGL has become a formidable competitor in the mortgage insurance market through acquisitions and could expand further via M&A. ACGL entered the mortgage re/insurance business in 2011 but was only marginally involved in the market at the onset, competing as a primary insurer through credit unions and as a reinsurer through the GSE credit risk transfer program. The company's 2014 acquisition of CMG Mortgage Insurance from Cuna Mutual gave it a bigger foothold as it received a ratings upgrade for its MI business (from BBB+ to A- at S&P) and gained distribution in the bank channel. Following the deal, Arch became a top 10 competitor in the domestic private MI market. Arch's market position strengthened further following its 2017 acquisition of United Guaranty (UGC) from AIG, which catapulted it to a top-3 spot (as part of the deal AIG retained 50% of mortgage insurance blocks originated by UGC pre 2017). Arch has also expanded in foreign MI markets through M&A, including its acquisition of Westpac's MI business in Australia (closed in August 2021).

Insurance: Lower Expense Ratio Drove Earnings Upside

The insurance business reported strong underwriting margins and healthy, but lower than expected, net written premium growth. Underwriting income in 4Q22 was \$98 million, higher than our \$90 million estimate, driven by a better combined ratio (CR 92.1% vs. 92.6%E). Net earned premium growth was higher than our forecast (+24.0% vs. +21.7%E) while net written premium growth was lower (+17.4% vs. +21.9%E, +18.6% in 3Q22, and +23.7% in 4Q21), which management partly attributed to some moderation in price increases, particularly in casualty lines. The lower combined ratio resulted from a favorable expense ratio (33.5% vs. 35.2%E), which more than offset higher than expected catastrophe losses (2.8% vs. 1.5%E) and slight unfavorability in the attritional loss ratio (56.2% vs. 56.1%E). Similar to the past few quarters, the acquisition expense ratio rose from the prior year due to a business mix shift to lines such as travel and professional liability, but this was mostly offset by a lower operating expense ratio given the benefit of healthy premium growth.

Table 4: Insurance Key Metrics

\$ in millions

	4Q20	2020	1Q21	2Q21	3Q21	4Q21	2021	1Q22	2Q22	3Q22	4Q22E	4Q22A
Net written premiums	838	3,163	995	964	1,154	1,036	4,148	1,207	1,228	1,369	1,263	1,217
Premium Growth (y/y)	21.6%	19.7%	20.0%	43.3%	40.0%	23.7%	31.2%	21.3%	27.5%	18.6%	21.9%	17.4%
Losses and LAE ex. cats and PYD	64.3%	63.6%	61.0%	60.2%	59.5%	57.5%	59.5%	55.5%	56.0%	56.0%	56.1%	56.2%
Catastrophe losses	8.3%	9.5%	5.1%	3.2%	12.2%	2.0%	5.6%	3.1%	1.5%	13.4%	1.5%	2.8%
PYD (favorable) / unfavorable	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.7%	-0.3%	-0.5%	-0.3%	-0.4%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.3%
Loss ratio	72.4%	72.9%	65.4%	63.1%	71.2%	59.2%	64.6%	58.5%	57.1%	69.3%	57.4%	58.7%
Acquisition expense ratio	13.5%	14.6%	15.6%	15.8%	16.2%	18.8%	16.7%	19.1%	19.4%	19.6%	19.5%	19.6%
Operating expense ratio	15.8%	17.0%	16.7%	15.4%	14.8%	14.9%	15.4%	16.2%	14.6%	13.9%	15.7%	13.8%
Expense ratio	29.3%	31.6%	32.4%	31.2%	31.0%	33.7%	32.1%	35.3%	34.0%	33.5%	35.2%	33.5%
Combined ratio	101.7%	104.5%	97.7%	94.3%	102.3%	93.0%	96.8%	93.8%	91.1%	102.8%	92.6%	92.1%
Combined ratio ex cats & PYD	93.6%	95.2%	93.3%	91.4%	90.6%	91.3%	91.6%	90.8%	90.0%	89.5%	91.3%	89.6%
Underwriting Income (Loss)	(13)	(129)	18	49	(21)	71	117	63	98	(34)	90	98

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

In our view, ACGL has attractive opportunities in the primary P&C market, and we expect premium growth and margins to remain healthy. After shrinking its “cycle managed” business (now dubbed as wholesale/large capacity) from 2012 to 2017, ACGL is seeing healthy growth in this part of its primary P&C book, driven by price increases in the broader market, particularly E&S. This, coupled with consistent performance in the less opportunistic parts of its book (specialty small/middle market and franchise), should drive healthy results in the business. On a cautious note, we believe that the market is past the midpoint of the current hard pricing cycle, and that exposure growth could decelerate if the economy slows. As such, although tailwinds in the insurance business should persist as premiums are earned and certain lines of business see harder pricing following Hurricane Ian (e.g. property coverage), we expect overall price increases to moderate through 2023.

Reinsurance: Strong 4Q, N-T Outlook Incrementally Upbeat

Arch's reinsurance segment reported robust premium and healthy underwriting results. The division generated underwriting income in 4Q22 of \$263 million, well above our \$141 million estimate. Reported margins were better than assumed (CR of 78.4% vs. 85.6%E), primarily due to lower cat losses (none versus 5.0%E) and better than expected prior year development (-4.5% vs. -3.0%E). Margins were better than assumed on a core basis as well (CR ex. cats and PYD of 82.9% vs. 83.6%E) due to a lower expense ratio (25.5% vs. 28.5%E). We usually do not analyze reinsurance results on ex. cats basis due to the concentration in catastrophe exposed business. Net written premium growth was robust, up 117.6% to \$1.8 billion, well above our 13.2% expectation. Management noted that results in the quarter included non-recurring transactions related to other specialty lines of business (property FAC and other non-cat property). Excluding the impact of the transaction, net written premiums would have grown 61.0% (roughly \$400 million impact), the loss ratio would have been 5 points lower, and the expense ratio would have been 2 point higher. On a normalized basis, we estimate that the segment generated roughly \$265 million of underwriting income (combined ratio of roughly 75.5%). Management sounded upbeat on ACGL's position

in the market amid constricted capacity from competitors. Also, it noted that primary insurers have been retaining more risk, which contributed to the low cat loss figure in the quarter.

Table 5: Reinsurance Key Metrics

\$ in millions

	4Q20	2020	1Q21	2Q21	3Q21	4Q21	2021	1Q22	2Q22	3Q22	4Q22E	4Q22A
Net written premiums	491	2,457	999	925	621	709	3,254	1,139	1,163	1,079	803	1,543
Premium Growth (y/y)	44.9%	53.3%	25.3%	63.6%	2.8%	44.5%	32.4%	14.0%	25.7%	73.6%	13.2%	117.6%
Losses and LAE ex. cats and PYD	58.0%	61.8%	56.3%	62.9%	57.4%	54.9%	57.9%	52.6%	55.3%	58.4%	55.1%	57.4%
Catastrophe losses	16.1%	19.1%	22.7%	2.5%	32.6%	6.7%	15.4%	6.7%	7.1%	39.1%	5.0%	0.0%
PYD (favorable) / unfavorable	-6.9%	-5.6%	-3.8%	-2.5%	-9.6%	-6.4%	-5.6%	-2.8%	-4.5%	-4.9%	-3.0%	-4.5%
Loss ratio	67.2%	75.3%	75.2%	62.9%	80.4%	55.2%	67.8%	56.5%	57.9%	92.6%	57.1%	52.3%
Acquisition expense ratio	16.9%	16.4%	18.3%	18.1%	19.1%	20.0%	18.9%	21.4%	20.4%	20.8%	21.0%	19.9%
Operating expense ratio	7.2%	7.8%	9.4%	6.1%	6.7%	7.9%	7.5%	8.7%	7.1%	6.3%	7.5%	5.6%
Expense ratio	24.1%	24.1%	27.7%	24.2%	25.8%	27.9%	26.4%	30.1%	27.5%	27.1%	28.5%	25.5%
Combined ratio	91.3%	99.5%	102.9%	87.1%	106.2%	83.1%	94.2%	86.6%	85.5%	119.7%	85.6%	78.5%
Combined ratio ex cats & PYD	82.1%	85.9%	84.0%	87.1%	83.2%	82.8%	84.3%	82.7%	82.9%	85.5%	83.6%	83.0%
Underwriting Income (Loss)	53	16	(20)	96	(39)	133	170	109	139	(197)	141	263

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

We remain skeptical of a sustained hard reinsurance market, but ACGL is better positioned than most peers to take advantage of favorable market conditions in the near term. ACGL's reinsurance business was initially established to take advantage of the hard market for casualty risk in the early 2000s. Over the years, however, management has shifted Arch Re's business mix away from casualty coverage towards other specialty lines such as surety, accident and health, agriculture, and trade credit, which are generally less competitive and have more attractive risk-reward. Firm pricing has benefited results in recent years and should drive continued strong premiums and margins in the near term, especially following Hurricane Ian. Still, we expect the pace of price hikes to moderate longer term and remain skeptical of a sustained hard reinsurance market given the expected entry of additional capacity. Factors that contributed to a multi-year soft market prior to 2018 (glut of capital, greater fluidity/speed of capital, more providers of capacity, broker consolidation) are still prevalent, and should preclude a prolonged hard reinsurance market. On a positive note, ACGL's reinsurance results could benefit from the release of COVID-related reserves, a significant proportion of which remain in IBNR. Similarly, we believe that loss reserves which were set up for Ian could ultimately prove to be too conservative (most primary companies booked lower Ian-related losses than reinsurers).

Maintaining EPS Estimates

We are maintaining our 1Q23 and 2023 EPS estimates at \$1.51 and \$5.31, respectively. Our 2024 estimate of \$5.63 is unchanged as well. Although we do not expect the MI reserve release in 4Q22 to recur to the same extent in future periods, thereby implying lower MI earnings in 2023, we project ACGL's higher run-rate net investment income to be an offset. We plan to re-assess our model after the company's earnings call tomorrow. In our opinion, cat losses (which would affect reinsurance and insurance margins) and housing market trends (which affect MI margins and premium growth) are the key sources of potential variance in reported results and our projections.

Investment Thesis, Valuation and Risks

Arch Capital (*Neutral; Price Target: \$58.00*)

Investment Thesis

We consider Arch a premiere franchise and are incrementally positive on near-term trends in the reinsurance market, but we remain Neutral on the stock. In our opinion, ACGL has an industry-leading reinsurance business that will generate superior and less volatile underwriting margins over time due to its unique culture and approach to the market. In addition, Arch has established itself as one of the top competitors in the mortgage insurance (MI) market, which we consider structurally better than P&C reinsurance. In insurance, ACGL has been able to grow premiums and improve margins, helped by the firm pricing market. We expect near-term results in MI to benefit from reserve releases. Furthermore, hard pricing should boost premium growth and margins in the reinsurance segment. Still, our long-term outlook for the reinsurance business remains cautious due to structural issues facing the market, including low barriers to entry, increased participation by third-party capital, and limited pricing power. Moreover, we believe that valuation is not too compelling given the company's long-term ROE and EPS growth potential.

Valuation

We maintaining our December 2023 price target of \$58. Our price target assumes a 1.3x multiple on our 12/31/23E BV ex. AOCI forecast, a 1.4x multiple on our 12/31/23E BV forecast, and an 11.0x multiple on our 2024 EPS estimate, and we corroborate this approach with a sum-of-the-parts analysis that values ACGL's re/insurance business separately from mortgage insurance. Our target multiples for ACGL reflect its current business mix, which has become more skewed to mortgage insurance. ACGL trades at 1.9x BV and 12.3x 2023E EPS compared to 1.7x and 9.4x for the reinsurance sector, 1.0x and 7.2x for MI peers, and 2.0x and 13.0x for the broader P&C group.

Risks to Rating and Price Target

In our opinion, ACGL could outperform and exceed our price target if:

- **Re/insurance pricing stays firm for an extended period.** A prolonged hard market could drive upside to our EPS estimates and lift sentiment on the stock.
- **Management sustains insurance underwriting margins close to the recent level.** In our view, investor sentiment could improve if ACGL is able to sustain insurance combined ratios in the low to mid 90s, a significant improvement from ~100% previously, as the tailwind from the current hard market recedes.
- **Management remains proactive with share repurchases.** ACGL has repurchased more stock than expected in 2H21 and 1H22, partly to take advantage of its depressed trading multiples. A continuation of the trend could drive upward revisions in EPS forecasts as well as boost sentiment on the stock.

We feel that the stock could underperform the group and fail to reach our target if:

- **The housing market deteriorates.** Given Arch's meaningful exposure to mortgage insurance and the more systematic nature of mortgage insurance risk, rising unemployment, higher mortgage defaults, and decreasing home values would pressure the company's results and hurt sentiment on the stock.
- **ACGL and/or peers raise capital to take advantage of the hard reinsurance**

market. This, in turn, could result in a reversal in pricing trends and potentially drive reduction in EPS estimates as well as hurt sentiment on the sector.

- **The pace of reserve development moderates.** Favorable reserve development has been a notable contributor to ACGL's results in recent years. A slowdown in the pace of development could pressure margins and returns.
- **Cat losses stay elevated.** While prices for cat re/insurance have hardened, the frequency and severity of losses have increased by a larger magnitude over time. This implies that reinsurance prices need to rise significantly for carriers to earn adequate returns, especially if cat losses are close to those in recent years.

Arch Capital: Summary of Financials

Income Statement - Annual	FY22A	FY23E	FY24E	Income Statement - Quarterly	1Q23E	2Q23E	3Q23E	4Q23E
Earned premiums	-	-	-	Earned premiums	-	-	-	-
Policy charges and fee income	-	-	-	Policy charges and fee income	-	-	-	-
Net investment income	-	-	-	Net investment income	-	-	-	-
Other income	-	-	-	Other income	-	-	-	-
Total revenues	-	-	-	Total revenues	-	-	-	-
Insurance and annuity benefits	-	-	-	Insurance and annuity benefits	-	-	-	-
Interest credited	-	-	-	Interest credited	-	-	-	-
Interest expense	(130)	(132)	(132)	Interest expense	(33)	(33)	(33)	(33)
Acquisition & operating expenses	(1,740)	(2,047)	(2,271)	Acquisition & operating expenses	(493)	(511)	(524)	(519)
Amortization of acquisition costs (net)	-	-	-	Amortization of acquisition costs (net)	-	-	-	-
Other expenses	-	-	-	Other expenses	-	-	-	-
Total expenses	-	-	-	Total expenses	-	-	-	-
Pretax income	1,562	2,193	2,280	Pretax income	625	589	424	556
Income taxes	(80)	(175)	(182)	Income taxes	(50)	(47)	(34)	(44)
Total net income	1,436	1,977	2,057	Total net income	564	531	380	502
Total operating income	1,840	1,977	2,057	Total operating income	564	531	380	502
Weighted average diluted shares	378	372	365	Weighted average diluted shares	374	372	372	372
EPS - operating	4.87	5.31	5.63	EPS - operating	1.51	1.43	1.02	1.35
Balance Sheet and Capital Data	FY22A	FY23E	FY24E	Ratio Analysis	FY22A	FY23E	FY24E	FY25E
Shareholders' equity	-	-	-	EPS growth - operating	36.0%	8.9%	6.0%	-
Shareholders' equity ex. AOCI	-	-	-	Book value per share (ex. AOCI) growth	16.5%	11.2%	9.7%	-
Shares outstanding	370	367	356	Return on equity (ROE)	14.4%	14.5%	13.8%	-
				Return on equity (ex. AOCI)	-	-	-	-
Book value per share	34.86	39.23	43.34					
Book value per share (ex. AOCI)	39.30	43.72	47.96	Dividend payout ratio	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-
Capital for share repurchases	-	-	-	Total revenue growth	-	-	-	-
Capital for dividends	-	-	-	Total expense growth	-	-	-	-
Dividends	0.00	0.00	0.00	Tax rate	5.1%	8.0%	8.0%	-

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.
 Note: \$ in millions (except per-share data). Fiscal year ends Dec

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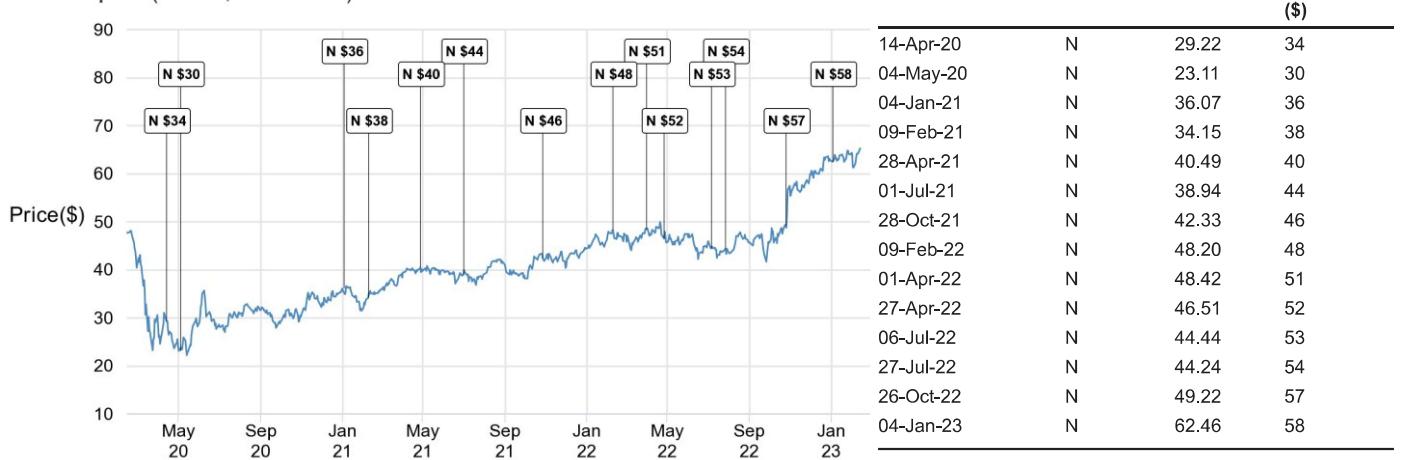
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Arch Capital (ACGL, ACGL US) Price Chart



Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. and J.P. Morgan; price data adjusted for stock splits and dividends.
 Initiated coverage Dec 15, 2003. All share prices are as of market close on the previous business day.

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