

2004 acquisition of Travelers, the company is now a leading underwriter of homeowners insurance and automobile insurance through independent agents. Has approximately 30,900 employees.

Alan D. Schnitzer. Chairman: Jay S. Fishman. Incorporated: Minnesota. Address: 485 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10017. Telephone: 917-778-6000. Internet: www.travelers.com

Past **ANNUAL RATES** Past Est'd '13-'15 5 Yrs. 11.5% 7.5% 11.5% of change (per sh) Premium Inc 10 Yrs. to '19-'21 9.5% 5.0% 6.0% 15.5% 5.0% 1.5% Invest Income Earnings 8.0% 9.5% 11.0% 5.5% 7.0% Dividends Book Value 8.0%

11839 49850

16553

78242

11971

48295

16320

76586

12706

48168

17474

78348

Unearned Prems

Total Liabilities

Reserves

Cal- endar	NET PR Mar.31	EMIUMS E Jun.30	ARNED (\$		Full Year
2013	5517	5603	5666	5851	22637
2014	5823	5928	5983	5979	23713
2015	5888	5931	6032	6023	23874
2016	5981	6067	6209	6303	24560
2017	6400	6450	6500	6575	25925
Cal-	EARNINGS PER SHARE B Full				
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2013	2.30	2.13	2.35	2.68	9.46
2014	2.95	1.93	2.61	3.07	10.56
2015	2.52	2.52	2.93	2.90	10.87
2016	2.33	2.20	2.40	2.57	9.50
2017	2.52	2.45	2.30	2.33	9.60
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID C=				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2012	.41	.46	.46	.46	1.79
2013	.46	.50	.50	.50	1.96
2014	.50	.55	.55	.55	2.15
2015	.55	.61	.61	.61	2.38
2016	.67	.67	.67		

Travelers third-quarter results were a bit of a mixed bag. Earnings from operations, which exclude capital gains and losses, clocked in at \$2.40 a share, which was \$0.12 above our expectation. However, the figure was a far cry from last year's comparable-period tally of \$2.93 and represented the fourth-consecutive period of a year-to-year earnings decline.

Many of the same factors that affected September-period results might well continue through most of next year. The combined ratio increased 6%, to 92.9% for the September quarter, reflecting increased weather-related losses and lower net favorable prior year reserve, a trend that is likely to persist in the months ahead. The abnormally low loss ratio of 2013-2015 appears unsustainable, and thus we look for an uptick in this metric moving forward. Also, as higher claims are paid out, it is less likely that there will be favorable reserve development in the near term. What's more, net investment income might well continue its struggle. During the third quarter, this line item fell 32%, to \$582 million. This doesn't come as a shock to us, given that yields on fixed-

income securities remain at historically low levels. We do, however, expect a modest uptick in investment income next year, as the Federal Reserve gradually begins to raise borrowing rates. On another note, net premiums earned ought to climb at a mid-single-digit clip, despite very competitive industry conditions. Travelers' strict underwriting standards and successful marketing initiatives should allow it to gain market share and retain existing accounts.

The industry behemoth seems well positioned for the 3- to 5-year pull. The combined ratio should remain at profitable levels, and better than the industry average over that span, barring an overage of catastrophes.

The recent pullback in Travelers' stock price adds to its long-term appeal. These shares offer worthwhile total return potential out to 2019-2021 on a risk-adjusted basis. Stock Price Stability is superb (100 out of 100), particularly when compared to its insurance peers. Conservative investors seeking a presence in this sector might consider a position here. Alan G. House December 9, 2016

(A) P/C only. (B) Dil. egs. Excl. cap gains and losses after '02. Excl. nonrec. (charges)/gains losses '02, 3¢; '03, 7¢; '04, 62¢. Excl. losses from disc. ops.: '00, 3/04 and 4/04. ■ Div'd reinv. plan avail. (D) Inextra. losses: '02, 3¢; '03, 9¢. Next egs. rpt. late Jan. (C) Div'ds. paid in late March, June, (F) St. Paul only until '04.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 100 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 55