



David Lyle
Head of RMBS Credit
Invesco Fixed Income

What are GSE Credit Risk Transfer securities?

Credit Risk Transfer (CRT) securities are general obligations of the US Federal National Mortgage Association, commonly known as Fannie Mae, and the US Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, commonly known as Freddie Mac. These Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) are mandated to expand the secondary market for residential mortgage loans through securitization. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac purchase and securitize loans and sell the resulting mortgage-backed securities (Agency MBS) in the secondary market. Agency MBS are guaranteed by the GSEs, meaning that these entities are responsible for the timely payment of principal and interest on the bonds and bear the risk of credit loss on the underlying loans.

CRT securities were created in 2013 to effectively transfer a portion of the risk associated with credit losses within pools of conventional residential mortgage loans from the GSEs to the private sector. Unlike Agency MBS, full repayment of the original principal balance of the CRT securities is not guaranteed by the GSEs; rather, "credit risk transfer" is achieved by writing down the outstanding principal balance of the CRT securities if credit losses on the related loans exceed a certain threshold. By reducing the amount that they are obligated to repay to holders of CRT securities, Fannie and Freddie are able to offset credit losses on the related loans.

Background

The CRT market is a product of the efforts of Fannie and Freddie's regulator, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, to accelerate the return of private capital to the residential mortgage loan market following the financial crisis. As home prices started to decline in 2007 and the US entered a recession, defaults on guaranteed loans escalated dramatically and the GSEs suffered significant losses. In September 2008, the GSEs were placed under the conservatorship of the US Treasury and received financial support in the form of lines of credit – effectively a bailout funded by US taxpayers. The credit risk transfer initiative seeks to reduce the exposure of taxpayers to such an event in the future by placing the GSEs in a last loss position rather than a first loss position with respect to most of the loans that they guarantee.

Growth

The CRT market has grown rapidly since its debut in July of 2013. Investor reception has been robust as it has become increasingly difficult to source exposure to credit risk linked to the residential mortgage loan market since the financial crisis. As of August 2015, there were USD19.3 billion of CRT securities outstanding from 22 issues.¹ These transactions have provided the GSEs with credit loss protection on approximately USD736 billion of loans to date.¹

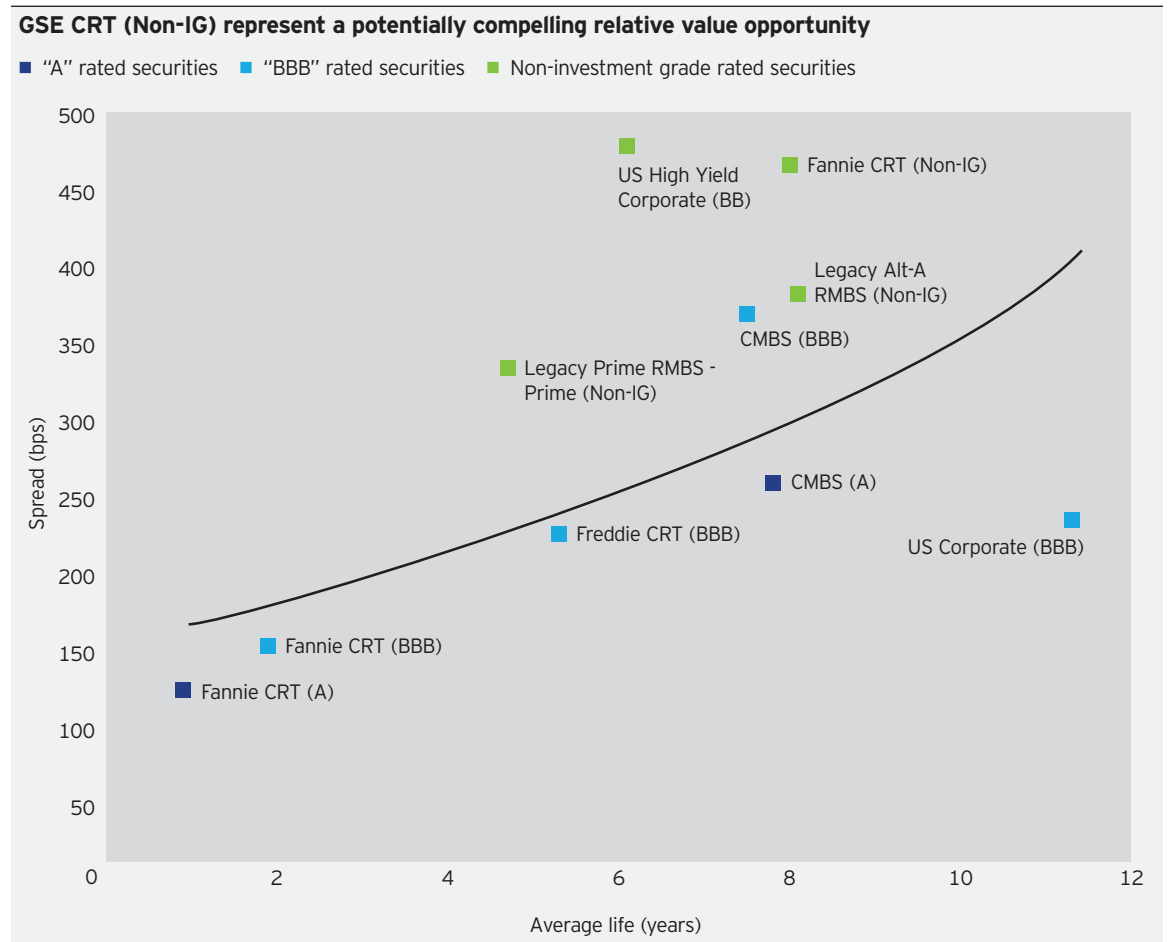
Today

CRT securities have come to represent the predominant form of non-guaranteed debt issuance related to recently originated residential mortgage loans in the US. They have enabled a wide range of investors to gain credit exposure to the ongoing recovery of the residential real estate market. We expect total issuance in 2015 of USD12 billion - USD14 billion, compared with USD10.7 billion in 2014.²

Why consider CRTs?

CRT securities can help diversify the risk profile of a fixed income strategy by providing credit exposure to the US residential mortgage market. We believe this sector offers a potentially compelling opportunity due to the strength of US residential real estate fundamentals and the high quality of loans that Fannie and Freddie have acquired in recent years. Additionally, floating rate LIBOR-based coupons could help to mitigate uncertainty related to the future path of interest rates.

We believe non-investment grade CRT securities are currently trading at attractive yields versus securities with similar credit profiles. These securities have the potential to provide favorable risk-adjusted returns relative to many comparably rated fixed income sectors as technical factors have pressured valuations, despite strong mortgage loan performance to date. Looking forward, we believe an expanding investor base is likely to improve liquidity in the CRT market, and credit risk premiums may contract as the sector continues to mature.



Source: JP Morgan: Freddie CRT (A) – STACR 2014-DN1 M1 Index, Fannie CRT (BBB) – CAS 2014-C02 1M1 Index, Freddie CRT (BBB) – STACR 2014-DN1 M2 Index, Legacy Prime RMBS - Prime (Non-IG) – Average of PRIMEX.ARM.1 and PRIMEX.ARM.2 Indices, Legacy Alt-A RMBS (Non-IG) - Average of ALT-A.HYBRID.PT.1 and ALT-A.HYBRID.PT.2 Indices, Fannie CRT (Non-IG) – CAS 2014-C02 1M2 Index. Barclays: CMBS (A) – US CMBS 2.0 A Index, US Corporate (BBB) – US Corporate Baa Index, CMBS (BBB) – US CMBS 2.0 Baa Index, US High Yield Corporate (BB) – US Corporate High Yield Index - Ba Component.

Data as of 30 Sept. 2015.

How IFI is different

Invesco Fixed Income (IFI) employs a balanced top-down, bottom-up approach in our portfolio construction process. Our top-down analysis examines factors in the broader economy such as GDP growth, interest rates, labor market dynamics, consumer data and corporate earnings. Our analysis then defines fundamental trends in residential real estate such as housing stock, mortgage originations, delinquency rates, loan origination conditions and housing performance across distinct geographical areas, which, in turn, shape our outlook for the residential market and the performance of housing-related debt. Robust bottom-up credit analysis also plays an important role.

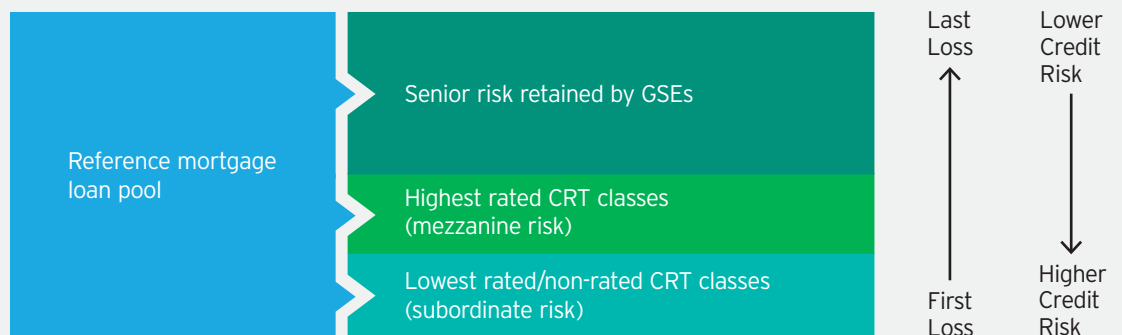
For any potential investment, our analysis begins at the loan level. Key collateral and borrower characteristics including delinquency status, loan type, balance, geographic location, property type, documentation type, occupancy status, current loan-to-value ratio and credit scores are reviewed to determine appropriate assumptions for prepayment and default expectations. Property level assessments and geographically detailed home price indices are utilized to update collateral value estimates. Where appropriate for the type of security, the team formulates assumptions for variables that are influenced by transaction parties, such as the servicers that collect payments from borrowers and manage property liquidations. Once base case assumptions have been established,

we perform structural analysis under multiple scenarios to determine likely cash flow profiles and to quantify the amount of projected loan loss relative to the credit protection provided by the transaction structure.

How CRTs work

Each CRT transaction generally includes several tranches that cover a range of cash flows, credit risk and potential return profiles. Historically, tranches with the highest credit quality have been rated A and feature a relatively short expected cash flow window and a large amount of credit protection in the form of a higher level of subordination. BBB rated tranches feature longer expected cash flow windows and lower levels of subordination. Finally, unrated tranches represent the longest expected cash flows and have the least credit protection, but typically offer the highest potential returns. Tranche prepayments and write-downs are based on the performance of the reference mortgage loan pool. As loans are prepaid, the most senior tranche is first in line to receive the proceeds, followed by lower-rated tranches as outstanding balances are paid off. As defaults occur, losses are allocated sequentially from the tranches with the lowest rating to the highest. Thus, unrated tranches experience write-downs, first, and if they are written down entirely, BBB rated tranches begin to take write downs, and so on.

Typical CRT Transaction Structure



1 Derived using Intex data, 31 Aug. 2015.

2 Derived using Intex data, 31 Dec. 2014.

Important Information

This document may contain statements that are not purely historical in nature but are “forward-looking statements.” These include, among other things, projections, forecasts, estimates of income, yield or return or future performance targets. These forward-looking statements are based upon certain assumptions, some of which are described herein. Actual events are difficult to predict and may substantially differ from those assumed. All forward-looking statements included herein are based on information available on the date hereof and Invesco assumes no duty to update any forward-looking statement. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that estimated returns or projections can be realised, that forward-looking statements will materialise or that actual returns or results will not be materially lower than those presented.

All material presented is compiled from sources believed to be reliable and current, but accuracy cannot be guaranteed. As with all investments there are associated inherent risks. Please obtain and review all financial material carefully before investing. The opinions expressed are based on current market conditions and are subject to change without notice. These opinions may differ from those of other Invesco investment professionals.

It is not an offer to buy or sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy or sell any security or instrument or to participate in any investment strategy to any person in any jurisdiction in which such an offer or solicitation is not authorized or to any person to whom it would be unlawful to market such an offer or solicitation. This document should not be distributed to retail clients who are resident in jurisdiction where its distribution is not authorized or is unlawful. It should not be relied upon as the sole factor in an investment making decision. Circulation, disclosure, or dissemination of all or any part of this document to any unauthorized person is prohibited.

All information is sourced from Invesco, unless otherwise stated.