

April 7, 2025

Garware Technical Fibres Limited: Ratings reaffirmed

Summary of rating action

| Instrument* | Previous Rated Amount (Rs. crore) | Current Rated Amount (Rs. crore) | Rating Action |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Long-term/Short-term fund-based/Non-fund based – Working capital facilities | 400.00 | 400.0 | [ICRA]AA+(Stable)/ [ICRA]A1+; reaffirmed |
| Total | 400.00 | 400.0 | |

*Instrument details are provided in Annexure-1

Rationale

The ratings reaffirmation for Garware Technical Fibres Limited (GTFL or company) reflects its strong business and financial profiles, with a market leadership position across many of the segments and geographies that it operates in. The company's focus on value-added product offerings and efforts to introduce technologically advanced products continue to aid its business prospects as well as profitability, with GTFL reporting operating profit margins of 16-20% over the past few years. The company remains well diversified across geographies and industry segments.

GTFL registered a modest 2% YoY revenue growth in FY2024, as export volumes remained muted through the fiscal on account of demand slowdown for certain products due to overstocking across the supply chain. While revenues from the domestic business had a modest YoY growth in FY2024, the geosynthetic division continued to report a robust YoY revenue growth momentum, albeit on a narrow base. With operational challenges associated with export sales largely abating in FY2025, the company reported an improvement in its export volume offtake, which, coupled with healthy operational performance of the geosynthetic division led to GTFL reporting 17% YoY revenue growth in 9M FY2025. Aided by steady domestic performance and moderate YoY volume growth envisaged for export sales, GTFL is expected to maintain a moderate YoY revenue growth momentum over the medium term.

ICRA notes GTFL's strong conservative capital structure and liquidity position along with healthy profitability indicators, supported by an improved product mix, prudent working capital management and strong cash flow generation from the business. Its liquidity position remains strong, with GTFL reporting cash and investments of more than Rs. 660 crore as on September 30, 2024. Moreover, with strong accruals, prudent working capital management and moderate capex plans, it continues to generate free cash flow from operations. ICRA expects GTFL's capital structure as well as coverage indicators to remain strong going forward as well, with the company maintaining a net-cash surplus position and the Total Debt/OPBITDA remaining well below 1.0 times over the medium term.

The rating strengths are partially offset by a price-sensitive domestic market, which may impact GTFL's profitability, and competition from the unorganised segment. The relatively sluggish demand for key product segments (especially the premium range of products where GTFL has dominant presence) in the domestic segment in the recent past may restrict revenue growth prospects of the company. Nevertheless, its active efforts to gain market share in the domestic fishery industry have led to a steady improvement in the company's domestic business performance in FY2024 and H1 FY2025, which mitigates the said challenge to an extent. The growth prospects and profitability of the company remain exposed to global economic activities and foreign exchange (forex) movements, given the substantial revenue contribution from exports.

ICRA also notes the recent rounds of share buyback by GTFL (of ~Rs. 110 crore in FY2023 and ~Rs. 245 crore in the present fiscal, FY2025). With an expected strong cash flow generation, and limited avenues for capital expenditure (capex), ICRA expects the company to continue buybacks/dividend payouts to the equity shareholders. While ICRA does not anticipate any

material influence of share buybacks on the company's credit profile or liquidity position, going forward, the quantum and frequency of such buybacks would remain the key rating monitorable.

The Stable outlook on GTFL's rating reflects ICRA's opinion that the company will continue to benefit from its established track record in the synthetic fibres industry in the domestic and overseas markets. The company demonstrates healthy revenue visibility on the back of its strong market presence across different product categories in the domestic and overseas markets.

Key rating drivers and their description

Credit strengths

Strong market position in domestic synthetic fibres industry; diversified revenue streams with steady and gradual growth in agri-tech, geosynthetic business and coated fabrics – GTFL has over four decades of experience in the cordage industry and commands a dominant share in the organised domestic market. Over the years, the company has established a healthy brand for its fishnets, ropes and twines, among others, catering to multiple business segments including fisheries, aquaculture, agriculture, shipping and industrial sectors. The company also offers project-oriented services through its geosynthetic division, which has witnessed a robust growth momentum in the recent past, with expectations of the same to be maintained, going forward. Such diversified segmental presence provides stability to GTFL's business against any segment-specific slowdown risks while also offering sufficient revenue visibility to the company.

Healthy profitability, strong capital structure, coverage indicators and liquidity position; improved working capital cycle leads to healthy cash flows – The company's profitability and return indicators remain strong with OPM of 16-20% and RoCE of more than 20% reported over the past few years, on the back of healthy operating performance and consistent improvement in the product mix towards value-added products. Healthy cash flows from operations and limited outgo for capex requirements have helped GTFL to maintain a healthy capital structure, evident from its gearing and TD/OPBITDA of 0.1 times and 0.5 times, respectively, as on September 30, 2024. Moreover, its liquidity profile remains robust, with cash and liquid investments (including investments in fixed maturity plans) of more than Rs. 660 crore, as on September 30, 2024, and a healthy buffer in the form of unutilised bank lines (Rs. 152 crore, as on September 30, 2024, and Rs. 145 crore, as on December 31, 2024).

Widening portfolio of premium products driven by increased focus on value-added products – The share of GTFL's premium product portfolio has been increasing over the past few years, driven by increased focus on innovation and a customer-centric approach. The share of value-added products went up to 70-75% during the last three to four years from the ~50% seen historically. The increasing share of premium products in the overall revenue ensures better pricing flexibility for the company.

Geographically diversified revenue mix – Exports constituted around 57% of GTFL's revenue in FY2024 (61% in H1 FY2025). The company is present in more than 75 countries with healthy positioning in the developed markets of North America and Europe, which contribute to the bulk of its export revenues. Access to overseas markets insulates GTFL's revenue profile from fluctuations in the domestic market and provides higher growth opportunities. The company is gradually making inroads into new geographies, as well as expanding its premium product offerings for the export markets.

Limited competition in domestic market in major product segments – The company competes with various organised as well as unorganised players in the domestic market. However, focus on premium products and investment in research and development (R&D) initiatives have helped GTFL establish a brand name for itself in the market, and sustain its market position over the years.

Credit challenges

Price-sensitive domestic market results in volatility in operating margins – The company operates in a price sensitive and fragmented domestic market, which is characterised by unorganised players. Further, the upward price movements in end-products (fishnets, twines, ropes) could result in a demand-side pressure from the retail segment. However, supported by an

increasing share of value-added content, a premium product portfolio and adequate pricing flexibility, GTFL continues to command healthy operating margins.

Sluggish domestic demand in key product segments restricts revenue growth prospects – Domestic demand for the company's key products (especially in the premium segments where it has a notable presence) has been relatively stagnant over the last few years, due to limited penetration of premium products in the domestic fisheries industry and extreme weather events in various regions. Thus revenue growth is restricted in the Indian market. However, GTFL is focusing on value-added products (through increasing awareness about the strength and durability and premium product offerings) as well as exports to offset the muted demand in the domestic market. Export sales provide a substantial growth opportunity to the company, because of a larger market size and its competitive cost advantage over other players in the developed economies.

Growth prospects and profitability exposed to global economic environment and forex movements – GTFL derives more than 60% of its revenue share from the export market and, as a result, it remains exposed to the global economic environment and foreign currency volatility. To mitigate the demand risk from a specific overseas market, the company has been geographically diversifying its revenue base. The forex-related risks are mitigated to some extent by the natural hedge from imports, which coupled with a few hedging practices of the company, mitigate the foreign currency volatility to an extent. GTFL's profitability is also partially exposed to the volatility in crude oil prices as the prices of its key raw materials—mainly high-density polyethylene (HDPE) and polypropylene (PP)—are linked to crude oil price movements.

Environmental and Social Risks

Environmental considerations: GTFL operates in the synthetic fibres space, which is characterised by processes and products with environmental implications and is, therefore, exposed to the risk of tightening regulations related to environmental norms, and potential penalties in case of non-compliance. Further, as some of its products are used in connection with natural resources (for example, fisheries), any restrictions on the use or on its customers in this space can have implications on the company's business. However, the company has been undertaking various measures to ensure that such risks are mitigated to a large extent. Few of such measures include preferring HDPE over nylon in its manufacturing to keep a check on carbon emissions, increasing usage of renewable energy sources, and focusing on more environment-friendly product offerings, such as cages with negligible copper sedimentation.

Social considerations: The company's exposure to social risks mainly pertains to safe operations and remaining compliant with various regulations to ensure the safety of its employees and the community in the vicinity of its manufacturing units. Additionally, retention of skilled employees remains important from a business continuity point of view. For this, GTFL periodically undertakes various initiatives towards employee engagement, training and development, welfare, awards and recognition, etc.

Liquidity position: Strong

The company's liquidity profile is strong, supported by unencumbered cash and liquid investments of over Rs. 660 crore, along with unutilised bank lines of Rs. 152 crore, as on September 30, 2024. Given healthy accruals and the absence of any large capex or long-term debt exposure at present, the company is likely to generate free cash flows that further support its liquidity profile.

Rating sensitivities

Positive factors – Significant improvement in the scale of operations, on a sustained basis, and strengthening of the business profile through increased product diversification, while maintaining comfortable profitability and capital structure, may lead to a rating upgrade.

Negative factors – A rating downgrade could be triggered by a sustained slowdown in key end-user industries and markets, exerting pressure on liquidity, profitability or coverage indicators. A deterioration in coverage indicators, i.e., total debt/OPBIDTA above 1.0 times on a sustained basis, might also lead to a downward rating. Any large debt-funded capex or

inorganic investments, weakening the credit profile or liquidity position, on a sustained basis, might also lead to a downward rating.

Analytical approach

| Analytical Approach | Comments |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Applicable Rating Methodologies | Corporate Credit Rating Methodology |
| Parent/Group Support | Not applicable |
| Consolidation/Standalone | For arriving at the ratings, ICRA has considered the consolidated financials of GTFL. As on March 31, 2024, the company had four subsidiaries, which are enlisted in Annexure-2. |

About the company

Established in 1976, GTFL is a leading player in technical textiles, specialising in providing customised solutions to the cordage and infrastructure industry globally. Its products find application across fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, sports, agriculture, coated fabrics and geo-synthetics. GTFL has two manufacturing facilities at Pune and Wai (Satara district) in Maharashtra. It has an established presence in the export market with about 61% of its sales in H1 FY2025 being generated from exports. The company is listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

Key financial indicators

| GTFL | FY2023 Audited | FY2024 Audited | H1 FY2025 Provisional | 9M FY2025 Provisional |
|--|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Operating income (Rs. crore) | 1,305.8 | 1,325.6 | 756.8 | 1,107.6 |
| PAT (Rs. crore) | 172.2 | 208.2 | 112.7 | 160.5 |
| OPBDIT/OI (%) | 16.7% | 20.0% | 20.6% | 19.9% |
| PAT/OI (%) | 13.2% | 15.7% | 14.9% | 14.5% |
| Total Outside Liabilities/Tangible Net Worth (times) | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.5 | NA |
| Total Debt/OPBDIT (times) | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.5 | NA |
| Interest Coverage (times) | 18.2 | 15.4 | 12.4 | 13.0 |

PAT: Profit after Tax; OPBDIT: Operating profit before depreciation, interest, taxes and amortisation

Source: GTFL, ICRA Research

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA: Not applicable

Any other information: None

Rating history for past three years

| | Current (FY2026) | | | Chronology of rating history for the past 3 years | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | | FY2025 | | FY2024 | | FY2023 | |
| Instrument | Type | Amount rated (Rs. crore) | Apr 7, 2025 | Date | Rating | Date | Rating | Date | Rating |
| Fund-based / Non-Fund Based, Working Capital Facilities | Long-term/ Short-term | 400.00 | [ICRA]AA+(Stable)/ [ICRA]A1+ | - | - | Mar 27, 2024 | [ICRA]AA+ (Stable)/ [ICRA] A1+ | - | - |
| Fund-based, Working Capital Facilities | Long-term | - | - | - | - | - | - | Jan 25, 2023 | [ICRA]AA+ (Stable) |
| Non-Fund Based Facilities | Long-term/ Short-term | - | - | - | - | - | - | Jan 25, 2023 | [ICRA]AA+ (Stable)/ [ICRA] A1+ |

Source: Company

Complexity level of the rated instruments

| Instrument | Complexity Indicator |
|--|----------------------|
| Long-term / Short-term, fund based/non-fund based – Working capital facilities | Simple |

The Complexity Indicator refers to the ease with which the returns associated with the rated instrument could be estimated. It does not indicate the risk related to the timely payments on the instrument, which is rather indicated by the instrument's credit rating. It also does not indicate the complexity associated with analysing an entity's financial, business, industry risks or complexity related to the structural, transactional, or legal aspects. Details on the complexity levels of the instruments, are available on ICRA's website: [Click Here](#)

Annexure-1: Instrument details

| ISIN No | Instrument Name | Date of Issuance / Sanction | Coupon Rate | Maturity Date | Amount Rated (Rs. Crore) | Current Rating and Outlook |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| NA | Working Capital Facilities | NA | NA | NA | 400.0 | [ICRA]AA+(Stable)/ [ICRA]A1+ |

Source: Company

[Please click here to view details of lender-wise facilities rated by ICRA](#)

Annexure-2: List of entities considered for consolidated analysis

| Company Name | GTFL Ownership | Consolidation Approach |
|--|----------------|------------------------|
| Garware Technical Fibres USA Inc. | 100.00% | Full Consolidation |
| Garware Technical Fibres Chile SpA | 100.00% | Full Consolidation |
| Garware Environmental Services Private Limited | 100.00% | Full Consolidation |
| Garware Technical Textile Private Limited | 100.00% | Full Consolidation |

Source: GTFL annual report FY2024

ANALYST CONTACTS

Shamsher Dewan

+91 124 4545328

shamsherd@icraindia.com

Kinjal Shah

+91 22 6114 3442

kinjal.shah@icraindia.com

Mythri Macherla

+91 22 6114 3435

mythri.macherla@icraindia.com

Yashowardhan Swami

+91 20 6606 9923

yashowardhan.swami@icraindia.com

RELATIONSHIP CONTACT

L Shivakumar

+91 22 6114 3406

shivakumar@icraindia.com

MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTACT

Ms. Naznin Prodhani

Tel: +91 124 4545 860

communications@icraindia.com

HELPLINE FOR BUSINESS QUERIES

+91-9354738909 (open Monday to Friday, from 9:30 am to 6 pm)

info@icraindia.com

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ICRA Limited



Registered Office

B-710, Statesman House 148, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110001
Tel: +91 11 23357940-45



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