February 20, 2026

Acme Chem Limited: Ratings reaffirmed; outlook revised to Negative

Summary of rating action

Instrument^	Previous rated amount (Rs. crore)	Current rated amount (Rs. crore)	Rating action
Long term/Short Term – Unallocated	10.00	10.00	[ICRA]A (Negative)/ [ICRA]A1; reaffirmed and outlook revised to Negative from Stable
Total	**10.00**	**10.00**	

^Instrument details are provided in Annexure I

Rationale

The revision in the outlook on the long-term rating of Acme Chem Limited factors in ICRA's expectation that the company's realisations will continue to be under pressure, given the dumping of low-priced imports from China and other global suppliers, impacting its profitability.

The ratings continue to factor in the established presence of the Acme Chem Limited Group in the rubber chemicals industry. The ratings draw comfort from the strategic location of Unit 1 near Unit 2 in the Panoli chemical hub of Gujarat. This proximity, coupled with the Group's established relationships with reputed automobile tyre manufacturers, has ensured repeat business over the years.

The consolidated capital structure remained prudent with the gearing at 0.4 times and TOL/TNW at 0.6 times as on March 31, 2025, due to a healthy net worth that was supported by stable accretion to reserves. The capital structure is likely to remain comfortable in the medium term. ICRA notes, in FY2024, Finorchem had completed the capex to launch products. The capex was partly funded through debt. Following the capex completion, the company is yet to achieve a ramp-up in sales. Also, Finorchem has incurred further capex to secure a critical raw material for one of its existing products, partly funded through debt. Consequently, the partly debt-funded capex, along with the high working capital borrowing, has moderated the coverage metrics in FY2025.

The debt levels are expected to decline by March 2026, driven by a reduction in working capital borrowings and scheduled amortisation of long-term debt. Consequently, the coverage metrics are likely to improve from the current levels over the near to medium term. Further, the market acceptance of the new products and their subsequent scaling up are likely to support the company's revenue growth along with the increase in its operating margins, thereby improving the coverage metrics in the medium term. The completion of the backward-integration capex is also likely to support the operating margins.

However, the ratings are constrained by the fact that Finorchem's Unit 2 is yet to achieve optimal capacity utilisation, although it is witnessing a gradual ramp-up in volumes. Further, the ramp-up of capacities from the newly rolled-out products remains a key monitorable. The company also faced pricing pressure that impacted the realisations in FY2025 and 9M FY2026 due to product dumping from international players. Further, rubber chemical manufacturing remains exposed to high sectoral concentration risks due to significant dependence on the tyre manufacturing industry. Besides, the Group is likely to remain exposed to foreign exchange rate fluctuation risk as a major portion of its raw materials is imported. However, this forex risk is mitigated to an extent by a partial natural hedge and the quarterly revision of sale prices offered to its customers.

ACL has large investments in land, mainly through subsidiaries and JVs, which have not given commensurate return till date, keeping the overall return on capital employed under check. However, the development agreement entered by ACL and some of its subsidiaries with a reputed real estate developer to monetise a part of the investment in land is likely to support its cash flows, going forward, though the timeliness of the same cannot be ascertained.

Key rating drivers and their description

Credit strengths

Established presence in rubber chemicals industry – The Group is an established player within the speciality rubber chemicals industry. Finorchem has two operating chemical manufacturing units - Unit 1 (the rubber chemical manufacturing unit of ACL transferred to Finorchem after the scheme of arrangement w.e.f April 1, 2019) and Unit 2 (acquired in FY2019). Unit 1 has a healthy share in the domestic market for its product range, though the product portfolio remains limited compared to its larger peers. Unit 2 has an established track record in the speciality chemical industry, with a reputed brand name, primarily catering to the tyre industry, and has a larger product range as well as higher capacity than Unit 1. However, the clientele, mainly belonging to the tyre industry, is similar for both units.

Comfortable capital structure – The consolidated capital structure was comfortable with gearing at 0.4 times and TOL/TNW at 0.6 times as on March 31, 2025, due to a healthy net worth supported by stable accretion to reserves. The capital structure is likely to remain comfortable in the medium term. However, the partly debt-funded capex, along with the high working capital borrowing moderated coverage metrics in FY2025. The debt levels are expected to decline by March 2026, driven by a reduction in working capital borrowings and scheduled amortisation of long-term debt. Consequently, the coverage metrics are likely to improve from the current levels over the near to medium term. Further, the market acceptance of the new products and their subsequent scaling-up are likely to support the company's revenue growth along with the increase in its operating margins, thereby improving the coverage metrics in the medium term. The completion of the backward-integration capex is also likely to support the operating margins.

Strategic location of plants – Finorchem's units are located at the chemical hub in Gujarat, with access to large cities such as Surat and Bharuch. Moreover, both the units are in proximity to each other, which is likely to provide some operational advantages. Finorchem's other two plants of relatively small capacities are in Kerala and are non-operational at present.

Reputed customer base with established relationships reduces offtake risks – Finorchem's acceptable product quality has led to repeat businesses from its customers over the years. The entity has an established brand, and its products have been approved by some of the prominent players in the tyre manufacturing industry, mitigating the offtake risks to an extent.

Credit challenges

Gradual ramp-up in Unit 2's volumes, however, yet to achieve optimal capacity utilisation – Finorchem's Unit 2 commenced commercial production in December 2020. Although the unit is witnessing a gradual ramp-up in volumes, it is yet to achieve optimal capacity utilisation. In FY2024, Finorchem had completed the capex to launch products, and the ramp-up of capacities from the newly rolled-out products remains to be seen. Going forward, further revenue growth will depend on Unit 2 achieving optimal capacity utilisation, market acceptance and ramp-up of sales of new products.

High sectoral concentration risk – The Group's clientele comprises major tyre manufacturing companies, exposing it to high sectoral concentration risks. Any slowdown in the domestic tyre industry will result in a decline in the operating income.

Exposure to foreign exchange rate fluctuation risk – A major portion of the raw materials required for rubber chemical manufacturing is imported, and the company is likely to remain exposed to foreign exchange rate fluctuation risk. However, a partial natural hedge arising from some of the exports and the quarterly price-revision arrangement with customers mitigate the company's exposure to forex risks to some extent.

Large investments in land, primarily through subsidiaries, yet to generate returns – ACL has large investments in land, a major portion of which is through its subsidiaries. Lack of return from the investments has affected the overall business returns so far. However, the development agreement entered by ACL and some of its subsidiaries with a reputed real estate developer to monetise a part of its land assets is likely to support the Group's cash flows, going forward, though the timeliness remains uncertain.

Liquidity position: Adequate

The liquidity position is adequate with a cushion in working capital limits. The average working capital utilisation was ~73% of the drawing power between December 2024 and December 2025, providing a cushion to the liquidity. As on December 31,2025, the company has ~Rs. 127-crore undrawn limits of the total sanctioned limits of Rs. 245 crore. The term loan repayment obligations are ~Rs. 26.7 crore in FY2027 and ~Rs. 26.7 crore in FY2028 and the company does not have any major capex plans over next two years. The estimated cash flow from operations would be adequate to service the repayment obligations.

Rating sensitivities

Positive factors – The rating outlook can be revised to stable if there is improvement in profitability and debt coverage metrics while maintaining adequate liquidity.

Negative factors – The ratings could be downgraded if there is an inability to improve the profitability from the current levels on a sustained basis. Further, any large debt-funded capex/acquisition resulting in increased leverage and pressure on its coverage metrics on a sustained basis, or a stretch in the working capital intensity impacting the liquidity profile of consolidated entity may also exert pressure on ratings.

Analytical approach

Analytical approach	Comments
Applicable rating methodologies	Chemicals Corporate Credit Rating Methodology
Parent/group Support	Not Applicable
Consolidation/standalone	The ratings are based on the consolidated financials of Acme Chem Limited

About the company

Acme Chem Limited (ACL), incorporated in 1992, is promoted by Mr. Narain Holani. Prior to the scheme of arrangement, ACL manufactured a few select grades of speciality chemicals, which were used as critical inputs for rubber manufacturing in small proportions. It manufactured rubber chemicals like peptisers, antioxidants, pre-vulcanising inhibitors, accelerators and others, which were used in different stages of rubber processing. The company primarily catered to automobile tyre manufacturers. The chemical manufacturing plant is at Ankleshwar in the Bharuch district of Gujarat and has a total installed capacity of 10,800 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA).

After the National Company Law Tribunal's (NCLT) approval for the scheme of arrangement, ACL's rubber chemical manufacturing division was transferred to Finorchem. Moreover, ACL's subsidiaries, Lesha Commercial Private Limited and Adirish Properties Private Limited, have been amalgamated with ACL to eliminate cross-holding. The parent, ACL, along with the subsidiaries (other than Finorchem) and JVs, engages in investing activities and deals in real estate.

Finorchem Limited (erstwhile Merchem Limited), incorporated in 1994, was involved in the manufacturing of speciality rubber and a few other chemicals. However, the company discontinued its operations due to financial stress. In FY2019, Finorchem was acquired by Acme Chem Limited through the corporate insolvency resolution process (under the provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016). Finorchem has plants at Eloor and Edayar in Kerala (9,120 MTPA) and Panoli in Gujarat (49,400 MTPA), with a total capacity of 58,520 MTPA. Finorchem's largest plant at Panoli was revamped and commenced operations in December 2020. In FY2024, the company completed capex to launch new products with additional increase in capacity by 31,000 MTPA to 58,520 MTPA. At present, the plant in Kerala is not operational.

Key financial indicators (audited)

ACME (Consolidated)	FY2024	FY2025
Operating income (OI)	542.2	557.1
PAT	50.8	29.6
OPBDIT/OI	11.5%	8.1%
PAT/OI	9.4%	5.3%
Total outside liabilities/Tangible net worth (times)	0.5	0.6
Total debt/OPBDIT (times)	2.6	5.0
Interest coverage (times)	5.6	3.1

Source: Company, ICRA Research; All ratios as per ICRA's calculations; Amount in Rs. crore, PAT: Profit after tax; OPBDIT: Operating profit before depreciation, interest, taxes and amortisation

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA

Not applicable

Any other information

None

Rating history for past three years

Instrument	Current year (FY2026)			Chronology of rating history for the past 3 years							
	Type	Amount rated (Rs. crore)	Feb 20, 2026	FY2026		FY2025		FY2024		FY2023	
				Date	Rating	Date	Rating	Date	Rating	Date	Rating
Unallocated	Long term/ Short term	10.00	[ICRA]A (Negative)/ [ICRA]A1	Apr 07, 2025	[ICRA]A (Stable)/ [ICRA]A1	-	-	Oct 23, 2023	[ICRA]A (Stable)/ [ICRA]A1	Oct 12, 2022	[ICRA]A (Positive)/ [ICRA]A1
				-	-	-	-	Mar 26, 2024	[ICRA]A (Stable)/ [ICRA]A1	-	-

Complexity level of the rated instruments

Instrument	Complexity indicator
Long term/ Short term – Unallocated	Not applicable

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 I: Instrument details

ISIN	Instrument name	Date of issuance	Coupon rate	Maturity	Amount rated (Rs. crore)	Current rating and outlook
NA	**Unallocated**	NA	NA	NA	10.00	[ICRA]A (Negative)/ [ICRA]A1

Source: Company

Please Click here to view details of lender-wise facilities rated by ICRA

Annexure II: List of entities considered for consolidated analysis

Company Name	ACL Ownership	Consolidation Approach
Acme Chem Limited	100.00% (Rated entity)	Full consolidation
Adirish Heights Private Limited	99.83%	Full consolidation
Emerald Heights Private Limited	99.08%	Full consolidation
Rational Heights Private Limited	82.53%	Full consolidation
Hiramoti Nirman Private Limited	67.56%	Full consolidation
Finorchem Limited	100.00%	Full consolidation
Satyam Enclave Private Limited	47.88%	Equity Method
Adirish Nirman LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Adirish Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Hiramoti Properties LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Keytouch Properties LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Lesha Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Nirmachan Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Nirmaalya Estate LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Buddhividhata Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Chaturanan Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Gajakama Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Lambkam Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Paridhan Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Raktakaraya Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Sukhanidhi Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation

Devyai Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Himganga Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Jagadisha Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation
Mahadriga Realty LLP	99.0%	Full consolidation

Source: ACL annual report FY2025

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ABOUT ICRA LIMITED

ICRA Limited was set up in 1991 by leading financial/investment institutions, commercial banks and financial services companies as an independent and professional investment Information and Credit Rating Agency.

Today, ICRA and its subsidiaries together form the ICRA Group of Companies (Group ICRA). ICRA is a Public Limited Company, with its shares listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange. The international Credit Rating Agency Moody’s Investors Service is ICRA’s largest shareholder.

For more information, visit www.icra.in

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