

**Internship Report on Inbound Supply Chain
Management at
Apex Footwear Limited**

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This report is submitted to the school of Business and Economics, United International University as a partial requirement for the degree fulfillment of Bachelor of Business Administration

Internship Report on Inbound Supply Chain Management at Apex Footwear Limited

Submitted to:

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Major: Supply Chain Management

Registration Trimester: Fall 25



**School of Business and Economics
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Date of submission: 11 March,2026

Letter of Transmittal

March 2026

Dr. Saad Hassan

Associate Professor

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United International University

Subject: Submission of Internship Report on "Inbound Supply Chain Management at Apex Footwear Limited

Dear Sir,

I am pleased and proud to submit my report on internship titled "Inbound Supply Chain Management at Apex Footwear Limited as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Business Administration degree from United International University. The report is based on my three months internship of Associate Trainee at Apex Footwear Limited, Unit 1 which has been done between December 7th, 2025 to March 6th, 2026 under the direct supervision of Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz who was serving as Deputy Manager in Inbound Supply Chain (ISC) Division.

This internship particularly gave me a chance to work in the ISC division and observe, albeit mostly assist with the full five stages of the inbound supply chain process — generating POs from Purchase Requisitions; arranging for bank & ensuring documentation; managing bond licensing & Prappota issuance, coordinating customs clearance through C&F agents & delivery of raw material on the factory floor. This experience gave me an incredible insight into the operational challenges of managing international procurement for one of South Asia's largest footwear manufacturers.

The report captures my honest attempt to analyze, document and reflect critically on what I experienced, saw, learned and contributed as part of the internship. I have kept the sensitive financial and operational details confidential as per my engagement terms with Apex Footwear Limited, and have tried to comply with the academic rules of business and format guidelines set out by United International University.

Thank you so much for your guidance and patience throughout this process. I trust this report finds you in good faith.

Respectfully yours

MD Azharul Islam Jami

ID: 111 212 004

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Declaration of the Student

I, MD Azharul Islam Jami, hereby declare that this internship report is work of my own and has not been submitted previously, either in full or in part, to any other institution for any degree or any other purpose.

MD Azharul Islam Jami

ID: 111 212 004

B.B.A

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Corporate Evidence



March 8, 2026

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that **Mr. Md. Azharul Islam Jami** (ID: 111 212 004), student of United International University has completed his internship program with the Supply Chain Management Department of Apex Footwear Limited. He attended the full-time internship program dating from December 7, 2025 to March 6, 2026.

We wish every success in his future career endeavors.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mizanur", written over a horizontal line.

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Acknowledgement

My academic supervisor, Dr. Saad Hassan, Associate Professor, School of Business and Economics United International University, deserve special thanks for his guidance and inspiration throughout the internship period as well as preparing this report. His conscientious feedback, academic rigor and sincere commitment to my learning have informed this report – as well as my wider appreciation of supply chain management as a field.

Lastly, I present my heartfelt appreciation to the management and people of Apex Footwear Limited, Unit 1 for allowing me to be a part of the organization where I have got such a professional experience. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Mr. Syed Nafiz Imtiaz, Deputy Manager, Inbound Supply Chain for his patience and professionalism in providing me with the details of every process that I was involved in during this internship which really made it transformative. He patiently explained each step in the ISC cycle and his mentorship gave me a level of practical understanding that I would have never got elsewhere. Along similar lines, I am also immensely grateful to members of the Procurement, Commercial, MRP, Bond and IQC teams for having graciously accepted me into their departments and patiently and openly answering all my questions.

Kudos also to United International University for introducing a systematic, totally mandatory internship program in the BBA curriculum. This program is a crucial link between academic learning and professional practice, so the internship brought that bridge alive in the most meaningful way.

Finally, my deepest thanks to my family for their unwavering encouragement, patience and support throughout the internship and in writing this report — which meant more to me than I can fairly express.

Executive Summary

This report is based on my three-month long internship at Apex Footwear Limited (AFL), Unit 2 from December 7, 2025 to March 6, 2026. Upon receiving the internship offer, I was assigned to Inbound Supply Chain (ISC) division and my internship supervisor was Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz, Deputy Manager, ISC. Founded in 1990, AFL is now acknowledged as the largest footwear manufacturer in South Asia. From its two manufacturing plants, approximately 11,000 people are engaged in serving customers in more than 250 owned retail outlets, 275 franchise stores and 150 wholesale distributors across all of the 64 districts of Bangladesh.

The ISC division covers the entire process of bringing raw materials from suppliers to factory in 5 steps. Supplier Communication: The first phase where Purchase Requisitions are translated into a Purchase Order and the relevant shipments are followed in IFS. The next is Bank and Insurance If payment needs to be made by submitting instruments (for example, a Letter of Credit or Telegraphic Transfer) and that transit insurance will also be acquired (specific terms for the trade rules). The third is Bond Management, where the company's government-issued bond license is kept up to date, annual Prappota documents are aimed at raw materials used and accurate records of the Bond Register maintained for regulatory purposes. The fourth is Custom & Delivery, which takes place when shipping documents are released through the bank into a Clearing and Forwarding agent while customs clearance is actively followed up. Stage five is Safe Factory Delivery, which involves transferred cleared goods being transported to the factory and inspected by IQC team before system IFS receiving into materials store.

During the internship, my work and responsibilities included keeping a daily shipment tracking log in Microsoft Excel, assisting with the preparation of document checklist for Letter of Credit applications for two shipments, helped the Bond officer cross-verify the entries made by production on raw material usage against the excel sheet-generated from the Bond Register (which is core job responsibility of Bond officer for which he used MS Access to re-confirm this entry), compiling daily customs clearance status

summaries, organizing shipment documentation so as to speed down time taken and attend weekly cross-functional coordination meetings.

Findings show that AFL's ISC is well-coordinated and backed by an efficient ERP. Strengths: The company has excellent ability to manage multiple payment methods, maintain its own in-house bond compliance function, and manufacture outsoles. AFL can improve in key areas of their business operations such as the reliance on raw materials imported from China where natural disasters can disrupt global supply chains and cause delays (like that which occurred during the onset of COVID-19), needing to rely on one source for most perishable supplies because there isn't time between seasons to acquire more than one, or international payments processes whereby some documents may not match and hold up incoming shipment clearance.

The report ends with recommendations for diversifying sources of import and implementing supplier development even earlier in the product season, enhancing alignment on pre-shipment documents with suppliers, as well as investing in local supplier relationships. A rapid growth in Bangladesh's footwear industry makes it vital for AFL to effectively manage its inbound supply chain, which will determine its ability to seize that opportunity.

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List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
AFL	Apex Footwear Limited
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration
BOM	Bill of Materials
CAD	Cash Against Documents
CDC	Central Distribution Centre
C&F	Clearing and Forwarding Agent
CPC	Central Purchase Committee
CS	Comparative Statement
EPB	Export Promotion Bureau (Bangladesh)
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FY	Fiscal Year
GRN	Goods Receiving Note
IFS	Industrial and Financial Systems (ERP Platform)

IQC	Incoming Quality Control
ISC	Inbound Supply Chain
LC	Letter of Credit
LFMEAB	Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Bangladesh
LWG	Leather Working Group
MOQ	Minimum Order Quantity
MRP	Materials Requirement Planning
OMS	Order Management System
PI	Proforma Invoice
PM	Product Management
PO	Purchase Order
PR	Purchase Requisition
PU	Polyurethane
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
QC	Quality Control

RM	Raw Material
RTGS	Real Time Gross Settlement
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SKU	Stock Keeping Unit
TPR	Thermoplastic Rubber
TT	Telegraphic Transfer
UIU	United International University
WRAP	Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Supply chain management (SCM) is one of the most successful functions in contemporary manufacturing. For firms that rely on importing raw materials from numerous countries, the capability of obtaining the right materials, at the correct time, and for the appropriate price is what allows constant production and competitive performance. This ability is put to the test every day in the Inbound Supply Chain (ISC) — that portion of the supply chain that's responsible for bringing raw materials from suppliers into factory.

Bangladesh has become a major footwear producing country, making hundreds of millions of pairs of shoes each year for local use or export. Over the past decade, Bangladesh's footwear sector has expanded significantly for both leather and non-leather shoes as global buyers are increasingly considering Bangladesh as an alternative sourcing destination. This surge has put increasing pressure on manufacturers to administer their inbound supply chains more efficiently, rigorously and resiliently.

Apex Footwear Limited (AFL) is South Asia's largest footwear manufacturer and the most commercially enlightened case of what a Bangladeshi footwear company can accomplish. AFL was founded in 1990 and has continued to grow over the years, manufacturing footwear for several brands today, while also operating the largest retail footwear network in Bangladesh that exports to buyers around Europe, North America and Japan. In total, their Inbound Supply Chain (ISC) Department — which I studied personally when interning with the company for three months at AFL's Unit 1 site from December 7, 2025 to March 6, 2026 — is responsible for a five-stage system involving the procurement and importation of raw material from Asian and European countries.

This report is a full account of that experience. In this article, I will cover: the company background; the industry landscape; a step-by-step account of the full ISC process as I experienced it; a description of the tasks I engaged in and skills developed; an analysis of AFL's inbound supply chain operations through an SCOR lens identifying potential strengths and challenges.

1.2 Background of the Report

The internship program is a formal and essential part of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree at United International University (UIU), which provides students with organized professional exposure to corporate environments that helps, contextualizes and supplements their academic studies. For Supply Chain Management (SCM) students, the exposure is particularly valuable — SCM is a discipline that you should not just read about from textbooks but rather have the opportunity to witness firsthand how procurement decisions are made and trade finance instruments applied, regulatory compliance addressed, and operational finality affected by cross-functional coordination.

This report draws on a three-month placement at Apex Footwear Limited's Inbound Supply Chain division. The multi-stage import process of AFL's ISC operation covering supplier communication and bank and insurance management, through to bond licensing, customs coordination and factory delivery — enabled an extraordinarily rich ground for observation and analysis of a sophisticated large-scale corporate supply chain in action.

1.2 Objectives of the Report

The general purpose of this report is to identify and evaluate the inbound supply chain practices of Apex Footwear Limited and describe what I have learned, contributed and my professional development during internship.

The specific objectives are:

- To map the entire five-stage ISC process at AFL — from IFS & Supplier Communication (P1), to Bank & Insurance (P2), Bond Management (P3); Customs & Delivery (P4) and Factory Delivery(P5).
- To introduce a substantial financial and operational image of Apex Footwear Limited with the aid of accessible annual report facts and industry specific know-how.
- To study the Bangladesh footwear industry, including its current situation, growth trends and competitive dynamics based on data collected from EPB, World Footwear Yearbook and others credible sources.
- To record some of my internship responsibilities, tasks, learning experiences and skills acquisition.
- To observe the existing practices of AFL's ISC first-hand and identified their strengths and weaknesses in a systematic way.
- To develop evidence-based, operationally feasible recommendations for enhancing ISC performance at AFL.

1.3 Rationale of the Report

The ISC function is often mistaken for a purchasing and logistics activity. In practice, for an import-dependent manufacturer such as AFL For an import-dependent manufacturer like AFL — which sources synthetic materials, adhesives, specialty outsoles and leather from China, India, Pakistan, Italy and Brazil.

— the ISC involves a complicated network of supplier relationships, international trade finance (LC, TT, CAD, RTGS), government-regulated bond warehousing of goods at destination ports until customs approval clears them after sale to the local market; insurance risk management; customs compliance. A breakdown at any point in the ISC process can cascade into production delays, missed retail windows and margin erosion.

Studying AFL's ISC practices is therefore directly relevant to the larger challenge of Bangladesh's footwear industry: how to manage ever-increasingly complex global sourcing operations efficiently, in a regulatory environment that demands specialized bond management know-how, whilst also navigating the supply risks induced by a dependence on a single dominant source of imports; China. These findings hold valuable lessons not only for AFL but also for any import-dependent Bangladeshi manufacturer looking to strengthen the resilience of their supply chains.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

The focus of this report is on the five stages of ISC process that involves the inbound supply chain operations in Apex Footwear Limited. It also encompasses the upstream processes that have a stake in ISC (Product Management, MRP, Costing) and quickly follows through with the outbound supply chain to give better context.

Items that limit the study include: The internship of three months duration limited the exposure to complete seasonal procurement cycles given that AFL operates across annual product development calendars that are typically 10–12 months long. Due to the constraints in accessing sites, some of the practices for managing bonds and customs clearance could only be partially observed. Lastly, a limitation of the study is that data are derived from only one company which does not serve studies generalizability within industry.

1.5 Methodology

Primary Data

The primary data were collected through systematic observation of live ISC operations on all five process stages, attendance in weekly cross-functional coordination meetings, informal guided discussions with ISC officers & managers (in Procurement, Commercial, MRP, Bond and IQC teams), first hand participation in certain operational activities

including shipment tracking; LC document checklist preparation and bond register cross verification.

Secondary Data

Secondary data came from the AFL in its Annual Report for 2023–2024 (Scribd.com) and financial data were obtained from Stock Analysis and Investing. com (DSE: APEXFOOT); Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), Bangladesh, industry sources; World Footwear Yearbook 2024 [UK]; The Daily Star, New Age Bangladesh (10 September 2022), published academic theses on Agile Lean practices in AFL supply chain.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Inbound Supply Chain (ISC): The coordinated set of processes through which a manufacturer sources, procures, finances, imports and delivers raw materials from suppliers to the manufacturing facility.

Purchase requisition (PR): Internal document generated by IFS in which MRP department orders procurement of certain materials.

Purchase Order (PO): To be a lawful commercial document issued by AFL to the supplier, indicating intent to purchase the items from supplier under stated terms.

Letter of Credit (LC): In international trade, an instrument issued by a bank that gives the supplier of goods or services our guaranteed payment at presentment of compliant shipping documents. Instrument with the highest safety & usage at AFL for high-value imports

Telegraphic Transfer (TT): A direct electronic funds transfer from AFL's bank to supplier's bank — faster and simpler than LC, usually used with established trusted suppliers.

Cash Against Documents (CAD): A type of advance trade payment whereby AFL pays the bank in return for receiving original shipping documents, which are subsequently required to clear goods from customs.

Bond Warehouse / Bonded Manufacturer: A proprietary government licensing arrangement, under which AFL can import raw material without immediate payment of customs duty (duty liability will be settled based on audited actual usage in production).

Prappota: A document issued by the Bangladesh government to specify, on an annual basis, how much of each bonded raw material is allowed to be imported based on records of its usage in productions.

C&F Agent: A licensed clearing and forwarding agent that assists AFL with customs clearance, port documentation, and coordination of inbound logistics.

Shipment ID: A unique internal tracking number generated by IFS, that can traverse from any ISC step, thus enabling end-to-end status monitoring of an import shipment.

CHAPTER 2: COMPANY AND INDUSTRY PROFILE

2.1 Company Analysis

2.1.1 Overview and History

Apex Footwear Limited (AFL) was founded in 1990 as Apex Adelchi Footwear Limited — a joint venture with La Nuova Adelchi, one of Italy's leading footwear manufacturers; their cooperation endowed the company with early technical knowhow and foreign design influence. In December 2013, a restructuring of its ownership led to the renaming of AFL to Apex Footwear Limited. The company was one of the first manufacturing organizations in Bangladesh to issue shares to the public, having listed on the Dhaka Stock Exchange in 1993.

AFL is recognized today as South Asia's largest footwear manufacturer (Apollo. io, 2024). It has two manufacturing plants and about 11,000 employees in its manufacturing, retail, wholesale and corporate operations — most of its factory workers are women. Its headquarters is in Gulshan-1, Dhaka while its main production factory in Chandra, Shafipur, Kaliakoir, Gazipur.

AFL does business in two major areas. In addition to serving consumers, the company's export division provides quality footwear for 130 retailers in Western Europe, North America and Japan; the company has also been recognized with the President's Export Award six years running. In addition, in 2013 the company achieved WRAP Gold Certification that recognizes compliance with international labor and manufacturing standards. Unit 1 managed its domestic division — the area related to this internship — best known as the largest footwear retail network in Bangladesh, which has more than 250 owned retail stores and 275 franchise outlets and also around 150 wholesale distributors across all of the country's 64 districts (Apollo. io, 2024).

AFL's vision Terra: "Honest Growth, Its mission is guided by sustainable development, being a trusted partner for buyers and suppliers; Creating value for shareholders; Proactive compliance, contribute to society. It also manufactures shoes under ten proprietary brands and retails some international brand in Bangladesh including Clarks, Crocs, Nike among others through franchise and distribution agreements.

2.1.2 Trend and Growth

Like any company, AFL's business performance over the last five years is a snapshot of an organization making its way through opportunity and adversity in each of its primary segments — domestic retail and export. The following table has required valuation and revenue data from the Dhaka Stock Exchange for FY2021 through FY2025 on AFL:

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue (BDT Million)	Revenue Change	Gross Profit (BDT Million)	Net Profit (BDT Million)	Gross Margin
FY 2021 (Jul 2020 – Jun 2021)	11,764	Slight decline	3,413	105	29.0%
FY 2022 (Jul 2021 – Jun 2022)	12,975	Moderate growth	3,699	138	28.5%
FY 2023 (Jul 2022 – Jun 2023)	16,536	Strong growth	4,421	167	26.7%

FY 2024 (Jul 2023 – Jun 2024)	14,978	Decline	4,523	176	30.2%
FY 2025 (Jul 2024 – Jun 2025)	17,734	Strong recovery	5,112	136	28.8%

Table 1: AFL Financial Performance FY2021–FY2025 | Source: Stock Analysis (DSE: APEXFOOT), 2025

The strong growth in FY2023 was driven by a domestic consumer rebound and rising export orders as the pandemic years recede. The decline in FY2024 was mainly driven by reduced export demand from European markets and inflationary pressures that suppressed domestic purchases. This implies that the gross profit of AFL had increasing in that particular year despite declining revenue, this indicates cost effective management and product mix. Sales recovery was above the previous peak level on strong recovery momentum in FY2025 as export and domestic sales resumed support.

AFL is also multiple winner of the six times President's Export Award holder and was awarded with HSBC Exporter of the year award 2010 in shipping. The company's years of commitment to ethical manufacturing have been verified high WRAP Gold Certification (2013)

2.1.3 Product / Service / Customer Mix

AFL designs and sells shoes under a portfolio of ten owned brands, each carefully positioned against a unique consumer demographic and price point:

- **Apex** — the flagship brand; dress and casual/lifestyle footwear for men, women, and children at all price tiers.

- **Venturini** — high-end fashion shoes and accessories for men, offered to upper-middle-class individuals.
- **Nino Rossi** — premium ladies' footwear and accessories collection with a fashion-forward sensibility.
- **Moochie** — high-end women's shoes and bags with a focus on contemporary designs.
- **Sprint** — focused on activewear and athletic footwear, aimed at younger urban consumers.
- **Maverick** — a casual lifestyle brand for young urban professionals.
- **School-Smart** — rugged, good-value school shoes for kids.
- **Twinkler** — Fun, energetic shoe and clothing brand for little ones.
- **Dr. Mauch** — therapeutic and orthopedic comfort footwear for health-minded consumers.

In addition to its own brands, AFL distributes other reputable international brands in Bangladesh, such as Clarks, Crocs, Police, Ipanema, Nike, Asics, Boggi Milano Steve Madden Triumph and Reebok. This portfolio of international brands enhances AFL's retail position, expands its consumer reach and creates franchise fee and margin income streams that complement the current revenues from manufacturing. AFL operates an extensive retail, franchise, wholesale, institutional and expanding e-commerce businesses that serve customers.

2.1.4 Company Operations / Activity

The operational cycle of AFL revolves around a planned, multi-departmental supply chain starting from seasonal demand planning. The PM team identifies product requirements via market research, consumer analysis, and intelligence collected at international footwear trade fairs including Italy's Garda Fair and Beijing Fair. The

Design Lab transforms these market insights into product prototypes and develops comprehensive BOMs for each item in the OMS.

The Shoe Line Meeting — a series of cross-functional review events that span several days and multiple locations, attended by senior management, PM, Costing, Procurement and Production teams is where product approval takes place. The approved articles are then sent to Costing department for a pre costing exercise which checks the commercial availability of that product after which Central Purchase Committee (CPC) formally approves these for production. This process allows the MRP department to calculate material requirements based on IFS Shop Order information, generate PR's, and launch ISC cycle activities. Production is conducted, once IQC-verified material has been received, and finished goods sent to CDC (Central Distribution Centre) for distribution through all sales channels.

2.1.5 SWOT Analysis of Apex Footwear Limited

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest footwear manufacturer in South Asia with over three decades of industry experience • Strong dual business model covering both export and domestic retail markets • Bangladesh's most extensive footwear retail network, spanning all 64 districts • Well-recognized flagship brand (Apex) with strong consumer trust across all segments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely reliant on imported raw materials, most of them from China • Exports business focuses on leather footwear, a sector witnessing contracting global demand • Fairly weak position in the fast-growing athletic and sports footwear category • Limited availability of good quality domestic leather as per international buyer's standard

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse brand portfolio of ten in-house brands covering every consumer age group and price tier • Franchise partnerships with globally recognized international brands • In-house outsole manufacturing capability, reducing dependence on external suppliers • Integrated technology systems supporting design, production, procurement, and distribution • Strong workforce of approximately 11,000 employees, with a majority of women in production • Recognised for ethical manufacturing practices with WRAP Gold Certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated borrowing costs consistently weigh down the company-wide profitability • Less notable investment in production automation relative to top global counterparts • The long product development cycle reduces their ability to respond to fast-changing fashion trends
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p>	<p>THREATS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh's growing middle class is increasing demand for quality branded footwear • Global buyers are actively reducing their dependence on China, creating new sourcing opportunities for Bangladesh • Non-leather and synthetic footwear exports from Bangladesh are growing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnam, Indonesia and Cambodia are stronger in athletic footwear compared to Bangladesh. • Demand for traditional leather dress footwear is decreasing due to the changing preferences of consumers • Bangladesh is set to graduate from LDC status, which may limit preferential

<p>rapidly year on year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of online retail opens a direct-to-consumer channel across the country • The athletic and sports footwear segment remains largely underdeveloped for AFL and offers significant growth potential • Foreign investment entering Bangladesh's footwear raw material industry may improve local supply options • AFL can expand its non-footwear lifestyle product range to increase revenue from existing customers • Government export incentive policies continue to support the competitiveness of Bangladeshi manufacturers 	<p>access in EU markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptions to Chinese supply chains – geopolitical tensions, logistics problems or natural events – hit AFL hard because they are tied into its production • Imported raw materials are costlier with currency fluctuations and lowered predictability of profits • Domestic energy and labor costs are slowly eating into manufacturing margins • Accelerating fashion cycles with more frequent and elaborate product development investments required
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Table 7: SWOT Analysis of Apex Footwear Limited

2.2 Industry Analysis

2.2.1 Specification of the Industry

Bangladesh's footwear sector has come a long way from the 1960s and 1970s, when it was primarily a craft-based leather goods industry. The industry underwent rapid modernization after liberalization and the arrival of export-oriented manufacturers in the 1980s. Today it covers the full range of manufacturers from large vertically integrated export oriented factories producing quality leather footwear for European and North American markets; through mid-sized domestic focused manufactures targeting Bangladesh's burgeoning middle class; to small workshops cranking out cheap sandals or informal footwear; and increasingly foreign invested factories targeting the emerging synthetic or athletic footwear export segment.

At the same time, for the formal manufacturing sector there is the Bangladesh Leathersgoods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (LFMEAB) while in terms of organized domestic retail footwear market; Apex Footwear Limited has been dominating jointed by Bata Bangladesh. Bay Emporium, FB Footwear, Step Footwear, Fortune Shoes and Jennys Shoes are other notable players in the Bangladesh footwear market at Bangladesh export segment. The footwear industry is the second-highest earner, behind raw leather, in terms of leather-associated exports and a much-needed component for Bangladesh's export diversification strategy considering RMG's dominance of the country's external trade earnings.

2.2.2 Size, Trend, and Maturity of the Industry

With an annual output of around 407 million pairs, Bangladesh is now one of the top 10 footwear producers globally, according to the World Footwear Yearbook 2024. Though it does not feature Bangladesh among the top 10 exporters in value, due to both a substantial domestic consumption of production and the fact that leather has been a keen national humidity rather than export gains in the more popular products worldwide like synthetic/sports shoes, the performance is nonetheless taking hold.

Fiscal Year	Leather Footwear Exports (USD Million)	Footwear (USD Million)	Non-Leather Footwear Exports (USD Million)	Estimated Total (USD Million)
FY 2021	Not recorded	separately	344	—
FY 2022	Not recorded	separately	449	—
FY 2023	484		385	869
FY 2024	544		417	961
FY 2025 (estimated)	Strong reported	growth	523	1,300+

Table 4: Bangladesh Footwear Export Performance | Source: EPB via New Age Bangladesh & World Footwear (2025). *FY2025 leather figure estimated based on H1 growth rate of 28.96% from EPB (World Footwear, 2025)

The most dynamic growth driver has been also the non-leather (synthetic and athletic) footwear segment. According to The Daily Star (2024) non-leather footwear exports expanded by 120% during the FY 2014-2024 decade, increasing from USD 189 million to USD 416 million. EPB data also indicates that exports of the non-leather footwear category stood at USD 522.59 million in FY2025 (New Age); thus successfully marching into the ‘Half- billion dollar export club’, an average annual growth of 23% throughout a decade against only 6% for leather footwear.

The global sourcing diversification trend triggered by US–China trade tensions and tariff pressures has been the key structural driver behind this growth. Western buyers — especially Decathlon, Kappa, H&M, Fila, Reebok, Target, Walmart and Steve Madden — have aggressively opened Bangladesh as a source of supply for synthetic footwear (New Age 2025). Here too, Chinese companies are directly investing in the footwear sector of Bangladesh: Three at least — Yixin Bangladesh Company Ltd, Dunion Taiyang Sheng Shoes (BD) Co Ltd, and Gold Emperor (BD) Ltd — have signed deals with BEPZA (Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority), agreeing to invest around USD 28 million on shoe and accessory production (New Age, 2025).

Rank	Country	Production (Million Pairs)	Primary Export Footwear Segment
1	China	13,475	All segments — dominates global production and export
2	India	2,600	Leather footwear, casual and sports
3	Vietnam	1,400	Athletic and synthetic footwear — major Nike and Adidas supplier
4	Indonesia	1,228	Athletic and casual footwear — growing export base
5	Brazil	908	Leather footwear — strong in the Americas market
6	Turkey	535	Fashion and leather footwear — primarily for European buyers

7	Pakistan	481	Leather and sports footwear
8	Bangladesh	407	Leather and non-leather footwear — exports growing rapidly

Table 5: Top Global Footwear Producers & Exporters | Source: World Footwear Yearbook 2024; EPB/New Age 2025

2.2.3 Industry SWOT Analysis — Bangladesh Footwear Sector

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Among the top ten countries in the world by quantity of footwear produced • Bangladesh has seen gradual footwear export growth in recent years • Massive, price-competitive and predominantly female workforce • Domestic tanneries serve as a crucial backbone for leather footwear manufacturing • Current GSP arrangements for preferential trade access to European markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy dependence on imported raw materials, particularly synthetic inputs from China • Scarcity of leather that matches the international buyers' quality standards • Limited share in premium athletic and sports footwear segment • Poor backward linkages for synthetic and chemical footwear inputs • More stringent compliance requirements than some rival nations • Large technology and automation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing interest of foreign investors to establish production factory in Bangladesh 	<p>gap compared to leading global producers</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p>	<p>THREATS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign buyers are actually diversifying dependency on Chinese manufacturing, and Bangladesh is well-positioned • Non-leather shoes exports have continued to record strong growth over the last decade, momentum continued • Growing worldwide demand for athletic and sports footwear creates fresh export prospects • Attracting foreign manufacturers who are embedding investment and know how into the Bangladeshi footwear ecosystem • Preparation for LDC graduation is inspiring producers in Bangladesh to enhance quality and competitiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upcoming LDC graduation in Bangladesh may result in losing preferential trade tariffs into EU • Vietnam and Indonesia are more mature competitors in the athletic and sports footwear space • The prices of raw materials — such as those for petrochemicals, leather and adhesives — can be volatile and unpredictable • Inflation in major export markets leading to decline in footwear consumer spending • Labour unrest and political instability rescue factory operations and buyer confidence

Table 8: Industry SWOT Analysis — Bangladesh Footwear Sector

CHAPTER 3: INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

3.1 Position, Duties, and Responsibilities

The internship period in Apex Footwear Limited is three months of duration from December 7th 2025 to March 6th 2026 by dividing our time into three month and my supervisor was Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz , Deputy Manager, Inbound Supply Chain (ISC) division. AFL's ISC division manages complete cycles — from procuring raw materials either from domestic or international suppliers to delivering the supplies right to the factory floor; all in five sequential steps — supplier communication and PO management, bank & insurance bond management, customs & delivery and finally safe factory receipt.

As is often the case among large, process-oriented corporate environments — my ISC activities included high-stakes financial transactions, legally executable import documentation and government-regulated bond compliance — I structured a tripartite workflow for my responsibilities: comprehensive review of internal process documents; close monitoring of live-ISC operations across all five stages; and hands-on assistance for discrete operational tasks. That said, my manager Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz set the expectations from day one: act proactively, go through all the documents and feel free to question him for doubts at any point of time and help out as far as possible and wherever applicable. This was my philosophy for all three months of AFL, and it granted me an operational knowledge that would have otherwise been impossible to gain through passive observation.

Shipment Tracking Log Maintenance

My most routine and visible operational duty was the preparation and daily upkeep of a consolidated shipment tracking log in Microsoft Excel. Prepared a structured spreadsheet capturing, against every active import shipment: PO number, Shipment ID, supplier name, country of origin, material category, payment method LC/TT/CAD/RTGS /shipment date/vessel/airline details/schedule arrival date at

Chittagong Port/Hazrat Shahjalal Airport/current ISC stage and delay remarks. The log was updated on a daily basis according to status communications with the Commercial team in addition to cross-checking IFS Shipment ID records. The ISC division handles around 15–20 active shipments at any given time, and so this consolidated tracking tool served as a single-source status reference for the team and was used by Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz in management briefings.

Document Filing and Organization

Every active shipment creates a massive amount of documents in 5 ISC stages, ranging from Proforma Invoices and Purchase Orders to LC application forms and communications with the bank, insurance certificates, commercial invoices and Bills of Lading or Airway Bill, Packing Lists, Certificates of Origin, inspection certificates and any customs clearance papers followed by GRN. Each shipment had its own separate file, placed in chronological order, and every document was clearly marked and easily locatable. Good info management has direct operational ramifications in ISC: if an LC doc is lost or misfiled, it may delay bank endorsement which can cause holds at customs clearance and affect downstream production.

LC Document Checklist Preparation

I was involved in creating document checklists structured rectification forms of checking that all documents required by specific conditions of the LC were available, correctly named and had consistency between PO as well PI from the supplier. Moreover, these checklists needed to consider the LC format requirements of AFL's bank, country specific documentation practices for the supplier's country and internal compliance standards of AFL. And they do so by carefully reading LC terms and conditions along with comparing them with required documents such as Commercial Invoice, Bill of Lading, Packing List, Certificate of Origin certificates which are needed for quality

inspection if applicable. It was difficult, technically exacting, and it highlighted my understanding of how LC documentation errors occur, and their significance.

Bond Register Cross-Verification

During my bond department rotation, I used to aid the Bond officer in verifying entries of raw material consumption recorded in a bond register against production records obtainable with reference to IFS. The bond register tracks all bonded raw material input from imports and their output within production or as finished goods for export. Usage of monthly consumption figures from IFS production data matched across the relevant bond register entries, and balances reconciled across periods. This work helped to load and identify minor valid data entry discrepancies, like defining consumption for a month that had been captured wrongly — and these were amended before the register submission regulatory filing so as to avoid any probable compliance checks by the Customs Bond Commissionerate.

Customs Clearance Status Monitoring

I prepared the status update information into a structured table derived from C&F agents emails and WhatsApp chats for active shipments at customs stage. Table showed for each shipment at customs - Bill of Entry filing date; Physical examination (pending / completed / waived); status of customs valuation assessment; duty payment status and expected release date. Allowing the Commercial team to rapidly pinpoint which shipments were at risk of being missed and required escalation, omitting the need to sift through structured email threads several people deep — a concrete efficiency gain for a department that was conducting multiple concurrent clearances on a daily basis.

Document Study Program

My learning under Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz was structured based on ISC process flow presentations, LC procedure guidelines, bond management manuals, customs clearance checklists and Prappota preparation guidelines of AFL's ISC internal deliberations documents. He suggested that I take my time to read through each document and review them closely, participate with the team on live process observations, and then come back with specific questions. This approach to reading from documents first and based on the documents ensured that my observations were analytically productive rather than passive, and it provided the procedural and regulatory detail within which the formal ISC process operates.

Cross-Functional Coordination Meeting Attendance

I Participated in weekly meeting for ISC cross-functional coordination — attended by Procurement team, MRP department, Production Planning and Commercial team. These meetings were a recap of the status of all active shipments, raised materials in danger of not arriving on time, and coordinated adjustments to production schedules that resulted due to supply constraints. These meetings exposed me first-hand to how supply chain decisions are made under time pressure across organizational boundaries — an experience that no academic case could ever reliably imitate.

Period	Key Activities
Week 1–2 (Dec 7–20, 2025)	Company and ISC division orientation; studying ISC process flow presentation and AFL overview documents; introduction to IFS system; meeting Procurement, Commercial, Bond, MRP, and IQC team members
Week 3–4 (Dec 21–Jan)	Setting up shipment tracking Excel log; studying PR-to-PO workflow documentation; observing PO generation and Shipment ID

3, 2026)	creation/authorization in IFS; beginning document filing system for active shipments
Week 5–6 (Jan 4–17, 2026)	Assisting with LC document checklist preparation; studying LC procedure guidelines; observing bank submission process for LC applications; learning TT, CAD, and RTGS payment processes; filing insurance certificates and bank correspondence
Week 7–8 (Jan 18–31, 2026)	Bond department rotation: studying bond management manuals and Prappota documentation; assisting Bond officer in cross-verifying IFS production consumption records against bond register; understanding bond license renewal process
Week 9–10 (Feb 1–14, 2026)	Compiling daily customs clearance status summaries from C&F agent updates; observing bank endorsement of shipping documents process; updating shipment tracking log with clearance stage data; attending first cross-functional coordination meeting
Week 11–12 (Feb 15–Mar 7, 2026)	Observing IQC material inspection and GRN process; attending weekly coordination meetings; brief outbound supply chain orientation at CDC; consolidating notes and data for internship report preparation

Table 9: Weekly Internship Activity Log

3.2 Training and Development

In Apex Footwear Limited, the intern training does not follow any formal structured curriculum with class sessions and learning outcome documents. Rather the method in this line of work is a basically a 100 percent hands on, learn-through-a-doing one; and Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz made clear to me that distinction within the first week: study the documents, watch what others do, question everything you don't understand most or at all. In my case this all worked fantastically, but it took a ton of self driven motivation.

Those two weeks of orientation provided the conceptual scaffolding for everything we learned afterwards. He treated us with a detailed overview of AFL's five-stage ISC process (and role of each internal team within that), and the significance of IFS system as operational backbone. He handed me a sheaf of documentation describing internal processes and advised me to read through the material before my initial sessions, so I could go observe some part of the process. After all, by the time I got to witness live ISC operations myself, I had already internalized the process logic — such that my questions were contextual and substantive not definitional.

The most technically useful training came from two sources. This helped me understand the practical aspects of IFS Shop Order reading, Net Material Requirement calculating logic, PR structure and authorization workflow, CS (Comparative Statement) preparation for Procurement and MRP Teams. By scaffolding this academic concept with examples of real-world CS — pricing on quoted IT shops against delivery terms, MOQ-conditions and payment terms list side-by-side against each other — it became a genuinely decision tool for procurement.

I found the most practical and hands-on training of the internship from the Commercial team, through a step-by-step introduction to international trade payment instruments that were being used in real AFL shipment scenarios. At UIU, we'd taught LC theory within the SCM curriculum; but observing that process — how LC application gets transmitted and a corresponding document discrepancy appears, how corrections are processed through the bank and what time-lag implications that has for a discrepancy — gave “theoretical knowledge” true operational meaning. In this aspect, knowledge

about these payment instruments can be a differentiator for supply chain professionals operating in the import-driven manufacturing ecosystem prevailing in Bangladesh, added Mr. Imtiaz.

From the Bond department, I was trained on Bangladesh's bonded warehouse system, the most regulation-specific layer of AFL and ISC. Learning the annual Prappota mechanism, responsibilities of bond register maintenance and cycle of bond license renewal were some specialized knowledge that are completely missing in any academic curriculum but extremely important practically for any job in import-dependent manufacturing industries in Bangladesh.

3.3 Contribution to Organization / Operations

While my status as an intern limited my contributions to the ISC divisions operations, they were consistent and reliable in several cases directly useful to the team's workflow and compliance obligations.

My most sustained and visible contribution at work was the Excel log tracking the shipments. The consolidated tracking spreadsheet provided the ISC division with one reference point to check what stage each active import was in across all five of the ISC stages. During my twelve weeks, Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz used the log in management briefings at least on three instances, reasoning that it is a practical time-saver communicating multi-shipment status to senior management. Keeping it up involved daily diligence and regular follow-up communications with the Commercial team — practices I kept up throughout my internship.

My work on document filing and organization aided both the ISC and Commercial teams with retrieval capabilities. In a department handling 15–20 active shipments concurrently, organized documentation minimizes time lost to document searching during time-critical follow-up activities — most notably where customs clearances require rapid retrieval of documents for submission.

The cross-verifying exercise of the bond register ended up as a solid compliance output with two minor data entry discrepancies being identified and corrected before submission to the regulators. These may have been small errors, but their avoidance was truly valuable — accuracy of bond register is under the regulatory scanner, and mismatches can lead to rupees worth investigations by Customs Bond Commissionerate.

The daily customs clearance status summaries saved significant time for the Commercial team who no longer had to collate information from C&F agent communications and allowed faster identification of potentially at-risk shipments, which in turn enabled more proactive management of escalations.

3.4 Evaluation

Apex Footwear Limited does not have any formalized evaluation process for the interns. But for the three months, Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz provided me with frequent and helpful informal feedback — specific, to-the-point and professional in tone.

Within the early period of the internship, Mr. Imtiaz noticed that I had only a basic understanding when it came to trade finance termination and asked me to review LC procedure guidelines once more before attending further process session with another Commercial team. His remarks were pointed: for instance, he noted that I was confusing the Bill of Lading (the shipping carrier’s document certifying receipt of goods for shipment) with the Bill of Entry (customs declaration filed at the port of destination) — a fundamental conceptual error. It was an explanation that patiently and simply nipped in the bud a frustration that had never really been resolved by my academic training.

By the time we hit midterms of my internship, Mr. Imtiaz had seen a noticeable refinement in the quality of what I sent him — going from definitional questions (“what is a Prappota?”) to analytical and contextual ones (“why does AFL use TT for this supplier

but insist on LC on that one, being both Chinese suppliers?") This evolution was a marker of real growth, and his acknowledgement of it felt both spot-on and inspirational.

In particular, Mr. Imtiaz praised the accurate and consistent log of shipment tracking, the approach taken to document filing in a systematic manner and the care that went into conducting a cross-verification of bond registers as far as task quality was concerned. He said my attention to detail was above his typical expectation of interns — a compliment I loved hearing while also something that pushed me towards making this a professional standard.

3.5 Skills Applied

Supply Chain Management Theory in Practice

The theoretical frameworks I built in my Supply Chain Management major all made sense when measuring and understanding meaningful value during the internship. The MRP logic — which I had at the time learned only as an inventory management algorithm — came alive in IFS, as a live operational process that connected demand signals from production planning directly with purchase requisitions.

The trade-off between supply security and cost efficiency, discussed in the context of sourcing strategy models (Chopra & Meindl, 2021), expressed concretely in ISC team procurement decisions about when they would accept single-source risk as versus when they needed to invest time developing alternative suppliers.

International Trade Finance

Out of all the experience I gained during this internship, it undoubtedly showcased the most noticeable increase in my practical trade finance skillset. I was able to leave AFL and explain — in clear, tangible business process terms — how an LC gets assembled and submitted for a shipment, what a document discrepancy is and how it gets resolved, when TT has practical advantages over LC, and what CAD means in the context of

document-against-payment payment flows. Any career that revolves around import-dependent manufacturing can easily apply this knowledge and it is a practical skill set that theoretical courses alone could never have developed.

Regulatory Knowledge — Bangladesh Bonded Manufacturing

During my exposure in the Bond department of AFL, I absorbed a basic understanding about the regulatory framework surrounding bonded warehouse in Bangladesh — namely around the Prappota authorization, maintenance of bond register and the annual license renewal process. This is extremely Bangladesh-specific, practically useful supply chain knowledge that is rarely taught in detail in academia and scarce among new graduates hoping to work at import-dependent manufacturing firms.

Data Management and Excel

Through the shipment tracking log, customs status summary tables and document management system my strategic use of Excel grew considerably in power — structured Table design, conditional formatting on the shipment stage for visualization purposes, data validation to ensure consistent entry followed by filter-based querying mechanism for fast topical identification. These skills transfer straight to supply chain operations and analytics roles.

Attention to Detail in High-Stakes Documentation

Working with LC documents, entries in the bond register and customs checklists — each of which can have actual financial and regulatory implications — had instilled a disciplined, verification-oriented approach to document work. I learned the hard way that if a field in an LC is mismatched, it can trigger something called a formal discrepancy; it causes delays, holding up clearance for payments and shipments for days or even

weeks at a time; entering some wrong period in the bond register would throw a case into regulatory compliance problem. These lessons inextricably raised the bar on my care standard with document-intensive professional work.

Professional Communication and Corporate Conduct

Over three months in a corporate environment at AFL, I learned how to communicate effectively across seniority levels; to contribute in multi-departmental meetings without overstepping my station; and to develop collegial working relationships with professionals from other functional areas. Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz's direct, professional communication style also served as a clear standard I proactively sought to uphold throughout the internship.

CHAPTER 4: INBOUND SUPPLY CHAIN OPERATIONS AT APEX FOOTWEAR LIMITED

4.1 Overview of the ISC Structure and Process Flow

The Inbound Supply Chain (ISC) at Apex Footwear Limited, Unit 1 is a defined five-stage process beginning when a Purchase Order is generated from a Purchase Requisition and ending with the safe delivery of raw materials to the factory floor after passing IQC. Cross collaboration towards managing the process is provided by the Procurement, Commercial, Bond and Logistics teams collectively with IFS enterprise system being the main operational or data platform used throughout. The ISC process consists of different stages, each with its own unique activities, remit and external parties regulated under AFL's ISC structure.

The five individual stages, as per direct observation and documentation done during my internship stage are:

- Stage 1 — IFS & Supplier Communication: PR review, pricing negotiation; PO creation and sharing with the supplier, plus follow-up, Shipment ID generation & authorization in IFS.
- Stage 2 — Bank & Insurance: Coordination of shipment insurance, payment processing through bank (LC / TT / CAD / RTGS), correction of payment documents and initiation of claims in case of materials damage.

Stage 3 — Bond Management – the yearly renewal of AFL's bond license works internally with ensuring Prappota documents are issued against authentic and verified RM usage and import quantities based on which Bond Register is simultaneously updated for regulatory submission and approval.

Stage 4 — Customs & Delivery: Post receiving signed documents from the bank – Endorsed shipping documents to be delivered to C&F agent; Payment of customs duty (in case of machinery imports); Follow up for timely custom clearance

- Stage 5 — Safe Factory Delivery: Movement of cleared materials from port / customs point to AFL factory, IQC inspection, GRN upgradation going for IFS, material store entry.

Supply Chain (Import Process)



Figure 1: ISC Process Flow — Supply Chain (Import Process) at Apex Footwear Limited

Source: Apex Footwear Limited, ISC Division Internal Presentation (2025–2026)

Stage	Key Activities	Responsible Department	Tools and Instruments
Stage 1: Supplier Communication	Review Purchase Requisitions, negotiate pricing with suppliers, generate Purchase Orders, share with supplier, follow up on shipment, create and authorize Shipment ID in IFS	Procurement and MRP	IFS system, Order Management System, email and phone
Stage 2: Bank and Insurance	Arrange transit insurance, process payment through Letter of Credit, Telegraphic Transfer, CAD, or RTGS, correct document discrepancies, handle damage claims	Commercial and Finance	Letter of Credit, TT, CAD, RTGS, insurance policy
Stage 3: Bond Management	Renew annual bond license, issue Prappota documents, update and submit Bond Register for government approval	Bond Department	Bond License, Prappota, Bond Register
Stage 4:	Obtain bank	Commercial and	Bill of Entry,

Customs and Delivery	endorsement of shipping documents, coordinate with C&F agent, pay duties on machinery, follow up for customs clearance	C&F Agent	endorsed documents, C&F agent coordination
Stage 5: Factory Delivery	Transport cleared goods to factory, inspect at IQC, process Goods Receiving Note in IFS, transfer to materials store	Logistics and IQC	IFS GRN, IQC inspection report, materials store

Table 2: ISC Process Overview — Stages, Activities, and Responsible Departments

4.2 Stage One — IFS & Supplier Communication: PR to PO

The ISC formally commences with the creation of a Purchase Requisition (PR) in IFS by the MRP Department, initiated on the basis of material requirements from Shop Orders produced by Production Planning. Each PR specifies the IFS material code, quality required, date for supply by and the Shop Order it services. Seasonal planning schedules may trigger multiple PRs at once.

The Procurement team starts outreach to suppliers when PRs are received in the procurement queue. For material that is regularly procured — standard synthetic fabrics, common adhesive grades, regularly used accessories — approved supplier relationships already exist, which enables the team to quickly move to price quotation. For new seasonal design materials — whether proprietary fabric constructions, specialty

embellishments, or design-specific components that are developed through the Shoe Line Meeting process — it takes time to identify a new supplier and sample and technically assess new suppliers prior to entering into a commercial relationship. The new-material supplier development process is always the most time-constrained in Stage 1.

The negotiation of price is a crucial and iterative process. The Procurement team uses the pre-costing target from Costing department which is based on Standard Minute Value (SMV) and material consumption as per BOM, to negotiate with vendors. These quotes are collected, and they form a Comparative Statement (CS) for price, quality, MOQ, lead time, and payment term to compare before being submitted to the Finance department for approval. No PO can be raised without finance sign-off — this is a financial control; a backstop for the entire procurement process to keep its head above water and on-budget, and properly authorized.

Finance approves / sends to supplier - PO gets generated by the Procurement Team in IFS Separately, each import PO also carries a Shipment ID — a unique tracking identifier generated by the Commercial team in the IFS system at the creation of shipment — which tracks its status through all five ISC stages. The Shipment ID must also be formally authorised before any downstream banking or customs activities can take place by a pre-defined approver, allowing management visibility over each active import.

After the PO is created, the Procurement team actively follows up with suppliers — reaching out throughout production to track what stage they are at in the process relative to the PO, confirm that shipment is still estimated for when planned, and identify potential delays as soon as possible. In AFL's ISC operation, a supplier delay flagged four weeks out allows Production Planning to modify the master production schedule; but one week out flags typically create unavoidable production disruption.

4.2 Stage Two — Bank & Insurance

Stage 2 — which is governed by the Commercial department — kicks off once a PO has been issued (in the case of purchasing from overseas) and consists of two parallel streams of activity: arranging appropriate trade finance through the banking system, and securing transit insurance coverage on the shipment.

4.2.1 Insurance Arrangement

AFL's Commercial team establishes insurance and freight responsibilities in accordance with the trade terms (Incoterms) listed within the Purchase Order, before any international shipment leaves the supplier's facility. The specific Incoterm varies by supplier and shipment at hand — For example, under CIF (Cost, Insurance, and Freight), the supplier meets both freight costs as well as insurance all the way up to destination port; under FOB (Free on Board) FAN takes responsibility once goods are loaded onto a vessel, arranging its own freight and insurance from that moment; under EXW (Ex Works), FAN is responsible for transport and insurance paid for in full from suppliers gate; while with CNF or CFR (Cost of Freight) it's again the supplier covering freight but without any included coverage arranged by AFL. Regardless of which Incoterm will be applied, AFL guarantees that every time any goods are sent to the company there is sufficient insurance coverage against risks of material loss, damage or theft during the trip — due to maritime disasters as well as ports mishandling, loading and unloading incidents and other events along the way. The insurance certificate is included in the standard paperwork bundle necessary during the LC process, and, at the port of entry, when clearing customs.

The significant operational discipline at AFL is the immediate claim initiation with insurance as soon as damaged materials are identified by IQC team. Just like other insurance policies, News Claims require that they are notified to the relevant underwriter within strict timelines, and bringing it back to a time after arrival will always weaken or remove any claim completely. Following the physical inspection of an incoming

consignment, when a damage discrepancy report is raised by the IQC team, this enables an immediate notification to be sent to the Commercial team whilst at the same time automatically kickstarting the insurance claims process and notifying the supplier about the discrepancy.

4.2.2 Bank Payment Methods

AFL deploys four different payment instruments for international purchases and the choice of which one to use for each shipment is based on a combination of factors: supplier country, supplier relationship maturity, transaction value, material criticality and the balance of commercial risk between buyer and seller.

Payment Method	Full Name	When AFL Uses It	How It Works
LC	Letter of Credit	Large international shipments; new suppliers; where payment security is essential	The bank guarantees payment to the supplier once all required shipping documents are correctly presented. Provides the highest protection for both buyer and seller.
TT	Telegraphic Transfer	Established, trusted suppliers; smaller or time-sensitive transactions	A direct bank-to-bank electronic payment. Fast and straightforward, but offers less formal protection than an LC. Used where the supplier relationship is reliable.
CAD	Cash Against	Medium-risk	AFL pays the bank in exchange

	Documents	transactions where a balance of security and simplicity is needed	for the original shipping documents, which are then needed to clear goods from customs. A middle ground between LC and TT.
RTGS	Real Time Gross Settlement	Domestic suppliers or urgent payments within Bangladesh	An instant settlement system used within the Bangladesh banking network for fast local payments.

Table 3: Payment Methods Used in ISC at Apex Footwear Limited

For the LC opening procedure at AFL, Commercial forwards supplier's Proforma Invoice, the approved PO and the authorized Shipment ID to AFC bank for formally placing an order of LC in favor of supplier's bank. All conditions necessary for the buyer to release payment are laid down in the LC, which must usually include presentation of the Commercial Invoice, Bill of Lading (or Airway Bill), Packing List, Certificate of Origin and any quality or phytosanitary certificates that may apply; all within set timeframes and according to descriptions specified.

One of the more operationally demanding aspects of the LC process is document discrepancy management. If the supplier presents subsequent documents to its bank for payment or negotiation during the delivery of shipment and there are minor deviations in these — if any date inconsistency occurred after quantity variation or minor details in wording with regard to material description, this all is also a formal discrepancy that must be passing from receiving bank side to AFL. This decision is based on whether the deviation from the forecast is considered no-fault, minor (and therefore acceptable under commercial tolerance), or if it needs to be corrected. In case there is any dispute resolution, this normally takes two to five days more on top of the

payment timeline (may affect the document endorsement and necessary towards customs clearance.

4.3 Stage Three — Bond Management

The Bond stage is the most regulation-centric aspect of AFL's ISC and mirrors Bangladesh's bonded manufacturing system — a government-administered program that allows licensed manufacturers to bring raw materials into the country for use in producing goods for export while deferring customs duty at the moment of import. Due to this duty deferral, bond management is a commercially critical regulatory function for AFL as holder of a bonded warehouse license.

4.3.1 Bond License Renewal

The Customs Bond Commissionerate, which is the relevant regulatory authority, issues the annual renewal of AFL's bond licence. The Bond department must prepare elaborate documentation as part of the renewal: audited financial statements of the previous year, a record containing all imported raw material used under bond (quantities, values and HS codes), verified usage records from production, export records for finished goods derived from bonded materials and import requirements for the current period. This needs to be done well before the expiry of the licence — a lapse in bond licence validity would suspend AFLs ability to import raw materials under the bonded arrangement and will instantly halt its import procurement activities exposing it to severe production risk.

4.3.2 Prappota Issuance

Prappota is a document issued by the government determining the quantity of each raw material that can be imported annually and are covered under AFL's bond. Issued

annually by the Bond department, based on actual consumption records of produced amounts (obtained from IFS) per prior year's production and projected production plans for the coming year. The Prappota establishes the bonding capacity limit of each bonded material — should AFL need to import more than the authorize amount (for example, due to a better-than-expected production season), it must apply for an amended Prappota, which can put pressure on lead times. Thus, Prappota preparation must be able to work closely with the Bond department MRP and Production Planning.

4.3.3 Bond Register Maintenance

The Bond Register is a mandatory government ledger maintained to track the entire lifecycle of every bonded raw material, from input in terms of an imported receipt, consumption in production (utilization) and output as exported finished goods. This register is carefully maintained by AFL's Bond department, and it serves as the foundation from which the government can verify that all duty-deferred imports were accounted for in production and export. Register also gets periodically audited, by the Customs Bond Commissionerate, leading to a regulatory penalty over differences between agreed imports and succeeded consumption through finished commodities. Thus, the prerequisite to keeping the Bond Register clean is cross-functional data accuracy — associated with IFS import records, production consumption data and export documentation.

4.4 Stage Four — Customs & Delivery

Once the imported goods reach out at entry port (mostly Chittagong Sea Port for sea freight and Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for airfreight), ISC moves to Customs & Delivery stage handled by Commercial team with assistance from C&F agents appointed by AFL.

4.4.1 Bank Endorsement of Shipping Documents

For LC-based shipments, original shipping documents (Commercial Invoice, Bill of Lading, Packing List, Certificate of Origin and inspection certificates) are first retained by AFL's bank as collateral for the LC obligation. These documents are not submitted to customs for clearance until they have been formally endorsed (released) by the bank. Once the LC payment conditions have been met, the Commercial team submits a document release application to the bank. Bank endorsement usually occurs in a duration of one to three business days, but if there are pending payment discrepancies or disputes the turnaround time will obviously be delayed — a direct correlation between the efficiency of Stage 2 (payment) and timeliness of Stage 4 (clearance).

4.4.2 C&F Agent Coordination

Once the bank issues endorsed shipping documents, the Commercial team presents these documents to AFL's designated Clearing and Forwarding (C&F) agent at the port. The C&F agent, as a licensed customs broker, submits the Bill of Entry to Bangladesh Customs on behalf of AFL, and submits the endorsed shipping documents with AFL's import license, bond license and Prappota authorization. The quality of the relationship with C&F agents — as far as their knowledge of AFL's import profile, capability to file documents in a timely manner and demeanour when interacting with customs officials are concerned — materially impacts speed in the clearance process.

4.4.3 Machinery Duty Payments

Bonded import of raw materials is duty-deferred but imports of machinery and equipment are outside the bond arrangement and hence subject to normal customs duty. When AFL imports production equipment — cutting machines, stitching equipment or other capital goods — the Commercial team coordinates to determine applicable import duties (typically via HS code classification and depending on customs tariff) that

applies to said machinery and arranges payment through the banking system before release of that machinery. The single stage of processing is the process in which proof of duty payment is submitted to the C&F agent who include this document in the customs clearance file.

4.4.4 Customs Clearance Follow-up

Once Bill of Entry is submitted, it is followed up both by C&F agent and the Commercial team with Bangladesh Customs for clearance. The consignment may also be physically examined by Bangladesh Customs (especially if the material type is being imported for the first time or any documentation discrepancies are flagged). Congestion at the port in Chittagong — historically one of Asia’s most congested ports — can lead to delays in clearing goods regardless of documentation quality. AFL Commercial team continually tracks the clearance stage of each shipment and escalates to senior management when production schedule integrity is compromised due to clearance delay.

4.5 Stage 5 — Safe Delivery to Factory

The last step of the ISC is when IQC verification and acceptance into the AFL factory materials store occurs following customs clearance. After clearance, the C&F agent arranges with transport contractors for the released goods — by truck — to move from port or custom facility to AFL’s factory in Chandra, Gazipur. The Commercial gathers transport status updates and gate arrivals Confirmation at the Factory.

Similar to any other factory, the Incoming Quality Control (IQC) people inspect each and every consignment in a systematic manner at the location. The IQC team checks quantity against the PO and packing list for every type of material; physical quality against the material specification in the BOM (e.g. color, texture, weight, construction, measurements); and functional tests where applicable (adhesion strength for adhesives;

tensile strength for fabric). Once materials pass IQC, they are formally received into IFS via the Goods Receiving Note (GRN) process and are available for production issuance.

When materials fail IQC — be it for the reasons of quantity shortfall, quality deviation or damage — a formal discrepancy report is raised which takes parallel tracks: the Procurement team contacts the supplier and works on a plan to replace/credit/reduce in next shipment as per observation, while the Commercial team — if damage has been found that leads to claim filing in insurance — initiates that process. The GRN process in IFS formally closes the ISC cycle and hands over responsibility of the materials from the ISC function to Production and Materials Management function.

4.6 Supporting Upstream Processes

4.6.1 Product Management and Demand Planning

Upstream signals from Product Management and Demand Planning kickstart the ISC process. What materials will be needed for the upcoming season is determined by the PM team's product selections — validated processes that include market research, consumer feedback, and international fair intelligence. Demand Planning converts retail targets into production volumes, while Production Planning creates the Shop Orders in IFS that process to generate MRP requirements — and after PRs. How accurate and timely these upstream signals are, affects on the ISC's ability to efficiently procure the right materials.

4.6.2 Design Lab and Bill of Materials

The BOM created by the Design Lab in OMS is the primary specification document for the ISC. Every single material in a BOM — fabric type, adhesive grade, outsole compound, accessory specification — directly becomes a PR and then a PO. As a result, BOM accuracy is one of the most important upstream dependencies: errors in material description, quantity or unit of measure contained within BOM will consequently

lead to wrong procurement and ultimately loss of production if incorrect/misplaced materials end up at IQC.

4.6.3 Costing Department

The Costing department conducts pre-costing exercises for each article prior to entering the production line — pricing per pair calculated based on BOM material quantities, SMV (Standard Minute Value) labor time and CPM (Cost Per Minute) Labor Rate including overhead allocations. In Stage 1 price negotiations, they form the negotiation anchors that the Procurement team targets in terms of pre-costing. In cases where Procurement alone cannot hit the costing target through negotiation with suppliers, the Costing team is brought in to seek suitable alternative materials or construction methods that maintain margin without sacrificing quality.

4.6.4 Raw Materials Overview

Material Category	Used in Leather Footwear	Used in Synthetic / Athletic Footwear	Main Country of Origin
Upper (outer surface)	Finished cow leather	Synthetic fabrics such as PU, PVC, mesh, and Flyknit	China, India, Pakistan, Italy, Brazil
Lining (inside)	Leather or fabric lining	Synthetic lining, mesh, or strobrel cloth	China; some local
Outsole (bottom)	Rubber, TPR, PU, EVA — mostly made in-house at AFL	Rubber, EVA, TPR; sports outsoles mostly imported	Mainly in-house; China for specialty outsoles

Adhesives and chemicals	PU adhesive, neoprene cement, latex, hardener, primer	Solvent-based adhesives and contact cement	Primarily China; some local suppliers
Reinforcement components	Toe puffs, heel counters, insole board, shank	Thermoplastic toe puffs, EVA insole boards	China
Accessories	Eyelets, laces, buckles, trims, thread	Velcro, zippers, woven labels, rivets	China; some local
Packaging	Printed shoeboxes, tissue paper, cartons, shoe bags	Same as leather footwear	Mainly local Bangladesh suppliers

Table 6: Main Raw Materials for Footwear Manufacturing at AFL

4.7 Brief Exposure to Outbound Supply Chain

Over the next two weeks of my internship, I was briefly instructed in AFL’s outbound export supply chain — how finished footwear is prepared for shipping to international consumers. It provided me with a helpful frame of reference against which the inbound process I had examined in such detail over the course of my internship could be compared.

The export procedure starts with the AFL's International Business (IB) team who oversees relationships with overseas customers and receives confirmed orders outlining product styles, quantities, delivery dates, and payment terms. These orders from buyers are channeled to relevant internal departments – Production Planning, Merchandising, and the OSC team to start the fulfilment process.

After production is finished, and final QC inspection has ensured that goods are packed into export cartons with packaging labelled based on the buyers specifications, the increase in demand continues as these goods will now be shipped to local distributors. The OSC team puts together the entire set of export documents required by both the buyer and target country — the Commercial Invoice, Packing List, Bill of Lading (or Airway Bill), Certificate of Origin and any inspection/compliance certificates requested from your buyer. In case, there are Letters of Credit required on the export side, AFL needs to exhibit these documents at their bank within the time frame prescribed by LC in order to receive payment.

This also includes working with freight forwarders and shipping lines to book space on vessels, arranging for the loading of containers at the factory or port of loading and ensuring they do leave, as needed under required shipment date in transaction. Delays in the shipment of exports — be it due to production delays, documentation faults or port congestion — can set up late delivery penalties or, under a transaction built on an LC basis, against a deadline for shipment that renders the payment instrument void.

While this was my first glimpse into the export end, it has built on the knowledge I'm gaining from the inbound process that I have been exploring these past three months to give me a fuller picture of AFL's entire supply chain: The incoming process brings in raw materials, and then its outgoing export sends finished product out for buyers around the globe. Working at one end of the supply chain helped me, because I was able to appreciate how much any efficiency in OSC flows through into AFL's ability to deliver its export commitments on time.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

5.1 Strengths in Current ISC Practices

5.1.1 A Formally Defined, Technology-Enabled Five-Stage Process

One of the major ISC strength at AFL is that there is a designed five stages process which lends itself well to being used throughout and IFS system supported. While most of Bangladeshi manufactures are informal and reactive by their line of business, ISC's operationally built on formalization (process documentations, authorization controls (i.e. shipment ID authorizations) and finance clearances for POs from IFS. This discipline in process reduces the likelihood of knee-jerk decisions, ensures accountability in each step of the way while it also enables ISC leadership team to focus on where a live workflow comprising of 15-20 shipments stands at any given time without losing sight of operational integrity.

5.1.2 Sophisticated Multi-Instrument Trade Finance Capability

Typically, trade finance in industry is done at a very high level of sophistication as evidenced by AFL being able to conduct international procurement through 4 different instruments LC, TT, CAD and RTGS. The flexibility allows the Commercial team to customize payment terms for each supplier relationship: LC security (both high value and new-supplier transactions), TT speed (for established trusted relationships) and CAD (for balanced risk). This new approach minimizes financial risk and preserves supplier relationship.

5.1.3 Dedicated Bond Management Capability

The existence of a dedicated Bond department with real specialist knowledge in respect of the regulatory framework governing Bangladesh's bonded warehouse sector, is thus a clear operational and competitive edge. Bond management is a compliance-heavy

activity that requires specialist knowledge, yearly interactions with the regulation, and permanent register care. Bonding department structure at AFL contributes to continuous bonded import authorization (a precondition for AFL's competitive cost structure in imports) with clearly defined ownership of license renewal, Prappota issuance and register accuracy.

5.1.4 In-House Outsole Manufacturing

The inhouse production of most outsoles (in TPR, PVC, PU and EVA compounds) by AFL removes from one of the most bulky and volume-sensitive quality-critical raw material import dependency. Making their outsoles in-house allows AFL to directly control the quality of one of the most influential components when it comes to shoe durability and comfort; it eliminates an entire supplier relationship from their ISC risk profile, as well as providing them with real cost advantages over competitors sourcing their outsoles from external producers.

5.1.5 IFS as a Central Operational Backbone

AFL can now leverage IFS throughout the entire supply chain – from Shop Order and MRP through PR, PO, Shipment ID, and GRN – to provide an integrated single source of operational data that connects all ISC stakeholders. Information integration across supply chain stages is one of the key determinants of efficiency; AFL's IFS platform demonstrates this concept in practice by providing full visibility regarding material needs, procurement status, or inventory position anywhere across an organization in real time.

5.2 Weaknesses and Operational Gaps

5.2.1 High Concentration of Raw Material Imports from China

This structural weakness in AFL's ISC that weighs the most heavily is its overly reliance on Chinese imports for synthetic materials, adhesives, specialty chemicals and specialty outsoles. According to New Age Bangladesh (2025), it takes a Bangladeshi manufacturer about 30 days to get raw materials from China — a substantial lead time that curtails agile supply chains and leaves a huge opening for disruptions arising in Chinese manufacturing or logistics. The same supply chain that made Chinese products cheap and available to Bangladeshi manufacturers now bears Chinese factories most of the burden of Bangladesh's economy — facing as it did during the COVID-19 pandemic catastrophic downstream consequences but demand for its product given inelasticity difficult to realign. The risk of this concentration is further exacerbated by the geopolitical tensions, the shipping capacity constraints and the BDT/USD exchange rate volatility.

5.2.2 Single-Source Procurement for Seasonal Design Materials

For design-oriented seasonal materials find more out of the box, new cloth developments, specially designed trims or go to decorative element: there is most of time gap between a green light for Shoe Line Meeting product and start producing what may be made on that moment possible for Procurement team to make it best with qualifying multiple suppliers as early as possible. Consequently, seasonal procurement of these materials often depends on a sole qualified source such that any supplier failure from capacity shortfall to quality failure or logistics disruption is without alternative sourcing mitigation. This type of single-source structural risk is a direct byproduct of upstream timing pressure driven by seasonal product development cycles.

5.2.3 LC Document Discrepancies as Clearance Bottleneck

Having observed this directly at the internship, some differences are evident in LC documents (even if they are small) and has been a major operational bottleneck at the Bank & Insurance stage.

And every discrepancy resolution also adds two to five days in time for the payment and document endorsement, thus triggering cascading delays downstream on Stage 4 (customs clearance) and so forth to Stage 5 (factory delivery). For time-sensitive seasonal materials arriving ahead of when a production window opens, three days miss the mark. This implies that pre-shipment document alignment communication with suppliers — confirming exact descriptions of documents, as well as their format, sequencing, and so on before shipment — may lead to a reduction in the frequency of discrepancies.

5.3 Impact of ISC on Organizational Performance

AFL's ISC can have a direct, measurable and multidimensional effect on organizational performance. At the nearest level, ISC efficiency is what allows the production floor to have the right materials at the right time to execute upon the production plan. AFL's FY2025 revenue of BDT 17,734 million (Stock Analysis, 2025) is contingent on a production throughput that relies heavily on the availability of raw materials in needed quantities and at announced intervals — hence any major ISC disruption would essentially cripple the company's ability to fulfill both its retail and wholesale commitments.

On a financial aspect, this function of bond management creates wide value by deferring duty on all bonded raw material imports. For a company the size of AFL — which imports hundreds of millions BDT worth of raw materials each year — the working capital benefit from deferring duty is substantial. Likewise, the insurance function hedges transit loss risk that would constitute a material financial exposure with coverage across AFL's import volume.

At a strategic level, ISC's performance affects AFL of maintaining its competitive edge. AFL will be able to capture a portion of this industry growth partly depending on its ability to procure diversified, timely and cost-competitive materials while Bangladesh's footwear export sector is experiencing a high-growth phase — leather footwear exports increased 28.96% and non-leather 30.25% during FY2025 (World Footwear, 2025). An ISC that is overly reliant on China, seasonal single-source risk and reactive, as opposed to proactive, capacity development will suppress AFL production responsiveness at the very moment when market opportunity has ramped up.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Recommendations

6.1.1 Structured Import Source Diversification Program

AFL must be formal in the establishment of a supplier diversification program with time-bound targets to mitigate its exposure on China-focused raw material categories — mainly focused on synthetic fabrics, adhesives and speciality accessories. Top alternative markets for priority sourcing opportunities include in order of preference Vietnam (for synthetic fabrics and accessories), India (PU materials, adhesives and leather), South Korea (specialty adhesives and chemical input), Turkey (accessories and leather) and domestic England suppliers for limited commodity items. Structural momentum for this program would come from having a dedicated supplier development officer within the Procurement team whose job it is to continuously identify, sample and qualify alternative international suppliers. Targeting 25–30% of presently China-dependent materials to be sourced from alternative markets within three years would in practice deliver a significant reduction in geopolitical and logistics concentration risk.

6.1.2 Advance Material Development Calendar

AFL should establish a formal advance material development calendar that would kick off supply chain development activities 8–10 weeks earlier in the seasonal product development cycle – ideally just after the previous season’s Shoe Line Meeting. This early-start approach moved the Procurement team into a position with ample time to identify, sample and qualify at least two different suppliers of various new seasonal design materials, thereby removing a structural driver of single-source procurement risk. Integration of this calendar as a standard within seasonal product development timelines and joint ownership by the PM, Design Lab, and Procurement teams.

6.1.3 Pre-Shipment LC Document Alignment Protocol

This pre-shipment document alignment protocol — a formalized exchange of information with each supplier to confirm the precise document descriptions, quantities, dates and specifications required under the LC prior to shipment of goods — is essential in order for AFL's Commercial team to limit not only the occurrence but also the financial cost of discrepancies in regards to LC documents. A simple, pre-shipment document checklist, which should be shared with the supplier at least two weeks before the planned ship date would help identify discrepancies and rectify them prior to shipment — avoiding post-shipment resolution delays that currently add 2-5 days to the payment and clearance cycle for each discrepancy.

6.1.4 Digital Shipment Tracking Dashboard

A real-time shipment tracking dashboard — authentication with IFS Shipment ID records — delivering all ISC stakeholders with the big-picture view of active shipments cargos, stages and timings would be very beneficial for AFL's ISC division. Shipments that are at risk of a stage delay should be flagged by the dashboard based on configurable trigger rules (e.g. LC is not opened within X days from PO issuance; customs clearance not obtained in Y days from document endorsement). This would allow the Commercial team to proactively identify and escalate issues instead of reactive and follow up with concerns, drastically reducing the amount of time senior management spends asking for updates and compiling them.

6.1.5 Domestic Supplier Development

AFL should create an aggressive domestic supplier development program for those materials that it now currently purchases from China where local alternatives could realistically be developed by anybody other than AFL—especially in the area of

commodity adhesives, standard accessories (eyelets, laces basic trims) and packaging materials. Even slight growth in domestic sourcing would significantly shorten import lead times (30 days from China vs. 3–7 days domestically), eliminate LC and customs processing requirements, reduce currency exposure and redress AFL’s backward linkage profile. According to a report published by New Age Bangladesh (2025), Chinese companies are investing in Bangladesh’s footwear raw material ecosystem themselves — an indication that domestic supply chain development is now possible.

6.2 Key Understanding

In three months working in AFL’s Inbound Supply Chain division, I have experienced in-depth aspects of supply chain management that no academic program could have imparted upon me. A number of insights emerge as lasting.

The ISC is not procurement — it is a whole sub-business. I had a superficial understanding of inbound supply chain management going into this internship; I imagined it consisted basically of procurement — finding suppliers, negotiating prices with them, and sending out purchase orders. I now recognize that procurement is only the first of five structurally distinct ISC stages -- each demanding different expertise, different external relationships, and different regulatory knowledge -- after three months at AFL. Trade finance, insurance management, bonded warehouse compliance, customs coordination and inbound logistics are not supporting activities to procurement — they are co-equal components of the inbound supply chain and a failure in any one of them has equally catastrophic consequences.

The whole discipline of bond management is one of the most critically underappreciated strategic functions. My education had offered me no exposure to Bangladesh's bonded warehouse regulatory system. I am now three months into my role at AFL and one thing has become clear: for an import business of any value, especially a company of the profile of AFL and its replenishers, compliance with bond licenses and accuracy in respect to the bond register is not a back-office administrative function — this is

strategic. Such a bond license lapse would bring all bonded imports to a halt, threatening the company's entire production operation within weeks. It is the quiet, painstaking work in departments like Bond that forms the invisible backbone of import cost competitiveness for AFL.

Supply chain risk management decision: Choice of payment instrument is Commercial team's multi-dimensional assessment of risk for each supplier relationship, relative value and criticality of the materials and commercial leverage between parties are manifested in their financial preferences amongst LC, TT, CAD or RTGS for each transaction. I will be structuring supplier relationships and payment terms differently throughout my career due to this insight.

Disruptions in the global supply chain always start upstream. The information in this query will only be available if the process of reasoning is correct; ISC problems are all about knowledge and information logics, every single one I encountered during my internship (a delay on supplier shipments, an imbalance in documents transferred between parties, a missing entry for bond register) were issues that can be tracked back to a decision gap or information misalignment earlier in the supply chain cycle.

6.3 Conclusion

My internship experience in Apex Footwear Limited made me understand the process that how things happens in a professional world which I closely observed and self-learned as intern for three month there. Gaining such extensive perspective in South Asia's foremost footwear producing manufacturer, generating BDT 17,734 million of annual revenue (Stock Analysis, 2025) and having the meanest network of footwear retail within Bangladesh in ISC division was also enriching and nuanced per se.

AFL's five-phase ISC framework is an integrated indeed a sound approach of inbound supply chain management. These, with the use of IFS as a centralized operating backbone and multi-instrument trade finance capability perhaps also explain why this company is only a stone throw from becoming a market leader — true competitive advantages that sets them apart from the vast majority of Bangladesh's footwear manufacturers. These capabilities have underpinned AFL's revenue rebound to BDT 17,734 million in FY2025 after the contraction of FY2024 and will be crucial for capitalizing on growth as Bangladesh's footwear exports are structurally rising — leather footwear up 28.96% YEAR over YEAR and non-leather up 30.25% YEAR over YEAR in FY2025 (World Footwear, 2025).

At the same time, the internship revealed genuine structural vulnerabilities: consolidation of raw material imports from China, repeat single-source procurement for seasonal design material and commercial penalties associated with delays due to discrepancies with LC documentation. These are not uniquely AFL — they are hallmarks of Bangladesh's import-dependent manufacturing economy — but they represent a domain where disciplined, persistent strategic focus can create meaningful, measurable progress.

The recommendations made in this report, which include source diversification (moving away from SOO), aesthetics driven material development calendar, pre-shipment document alignment protocol, real-time ISC dashboard etc. along with domestic supplier

development — are evidence-based operationally feasible grounded in specific process observations made during the entire internship experience. So implementing these would bring about greater stability and resilience within AFL's supply chain, reduce operating costs and place the company in a stronger position to scale in line with Bangladesh's rapidly expanding footwear export opportunity.

My heart-felt thanks to Mr. Nafiz Imtiaz, all the Enterprise teams at AFL Unit 1 in ISC, Commercial, Bond, Procurement and MRP for their generosity of professionalism and patience in sharing their expertise with me. I am now better prepared as a supply chain professional than I was before this internship.

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