



SMEs EXPORT

Argentine Technology and Innovation



**SAFETY
FOOTWEAR**

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Exporting Potential

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BORIS HNOS S.A., high-performance safety footwear



Boris is an **IRAM 3610 and ISO 9001:2015 certified company based in Argentina**. It has production capacity of **360,000 pairs of footwear per year**, a figure that covers 20% of the domestic market.

Boris shoes are made of 100% cowhide leather with polyurethane soles, bi-density with direct injection on upper machines, and manual stitching.

The company resorted to INTI to comply with both national and international specifications for their safety footwear production as defined by the local IRAM 3610:2015 standard, which sets out the requirements and test methods for this type of footwear, and the European Standard UNE EN ISO 20345:2022 for personal protective equipment and safety footwear. This enabled the company to improve its competitiveness and expand its market presence.

In its production line twenty-three models are made, including the “33033 boot”, which stands out for its vamp and shaft in full-grain cowhide leather, a material that is resistant to traction and tearing. Steel toecaps are used in safety footwear, and plastic toecaps in work boots. The company has a 3,500 m² manufacturing plant, which is equipped with injection, trimming, silk-screen printing, automatic sewing, die-cutting, toe assembly, and re-sharpening machines.

Sales manager Natalia Salles explains, “We are a family-owned company that has been in business for several decades. We are committed to national production and invest in the country. We believe that what differentiates us from the competition and has kept us going over time is that, without advertising, our footwear is well-known in the market. Year after year, consumers choose us because of our proven track record. We are established in the market based on our comfort products, designed to be worn for many hours.”

BORIS S.A. is currently seeking to expand into Mercosur markets.

Adriana Cachile, head of the Department of Technologies for Leather and Footwear Production at INTI, says that new materials have been discovered through technological advancement over the years, offering better comfort and protection for lower extremities, as well as longer-lasting strength, safety, and durability for new products. This is one of INTI’s challenges for permanently supporting the sector.

“Our name is associated with competitive, quality footwear. We are committed to innovation and quality, focused on guaranteeing comfort and safety for our users and betting on growth,” Ms. Salles concludes.



According to a report by the Chamber of the Footwear Industry (Cámara Argentina del Calzado, CIC), the domestic footwear industry has over 1,200 factories, predominantly SMEs. These companies employ more than 50,000 people directly and indirectly and are located mainly in the Greater Buenos Aires and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, and in the provinces of Córdoba and Santa Fe.

Boris Hnos. S.A.

Parque Unión Industrial de Quilmes (Bernal), Buenos Aires Province
Manufacture of safety footwear

• POSICIONES ARANCELARIAS (NCM):

- 6401.10.00 / Footwear with Protective Metal Toecap
- 6401.10.00 100R / Rubber
- 6401.10.00 / Plastic Toecap



INTEGRAL KA S.A., insulating and durable safety footwear



In an effort to expand its presence in the domestic and international markets, the company resorted to INTI to improve its manufacturing process and product quality.

Located in Boulogne, Buenos Aires Province, Integral Ka S.A. manufactures safety shoes—under the brand name Rocky Calzados—and sports footwear for different brands.

Director and legal representative Aníbal Pellarolo comments that the company has its own laboratory to control that its inputs are in line with the parameters outlined in the IRAM 3610:2015 standard. It also sends footwear and input samples periodically to INTI to guarantee that their internal controls are accurate, ensuring that its production complies with the established quality standards.

The shoes are manufactured in full-grain leather from first-class tanneries. The materials used are rubber and polyurethane soles resistant to high temperatures, abrasion, and wear, featuring steel and composite toecaps for safety and comfort. All its products are homologated, and its best-selling model is the boot with steel toecap and rubber sole.

Its products are dielectric (insulating), with soles resistant to high temperatures and oil absorption, cemented and baked for enhanced durability and safety.

The company has three product lines: Ultralight, rubber sole, and polyurethane sole.

It is IRAM 3610 certified and has a production capacity of 144,000 shoes per year, of which 48,000 are safety shoes. Currently, it wishes to enter the Uruguayan and Paraguayan markets.

“Our company was founded by professionals with more than thirty years of expertise in different areas of leading footwear companies. From the beginning, we have specialized in the manufacturing of footwear for leading brands in the market, with whom we maintain a long-standing business relationship.

“We have developed a new business division to produce, market, and distribute safety footwear under the highest standards of design, quality, and durability,” adds Mr. Pellarolo.

Adriana Cachile, head of INTI’s Department of Technologies for Leather and Footwear Production, says that the company teamed up with the institute to work on a series of activities and analyses aimed at enhancing its products and processes for greater safety and durability of its footwear.



In 2022, the footwear industry hit its all-time production record with 121 million pairs manufactured by Argentine SMEs, according to data from the Chamber of the Footwear Industry.

Integral Ka. S.A.

Boulogne, Buenos Aires Province
Safety footwear manufacturing

• HS CODE (NCM):

-6403.40 / Other footwear with rubber, plastic, leather, or composition leather soles and leather uppers with protective metal toecaps.



MARIANA S.A., ongoing evolution in safety footwear



To comply with different national and international safety standards, the company received assistance from INTI to analyze its raw materials.

Mariana S.A. has a proven track record of over forty years manufacturing professional workwear and industrial safety footwear in Argentina.



From its plants in the provinces of Mendoza, San Juan, and La Rioja, its products are manufactured with hydrofuge leather, double border lining, impact-strength TPU heel pads, and comfort insoles made of recovered microcellular polyurethane and activated carbon.

Commercial manager Ramiro Coray points out that the company is a licensee of the brands OMBU and GRAFA 70. As of 2019, it is also the only factory in Argentina with the capacity to manufacture the LOTTO WORKS brand, a subsidiary of the renowned Italian manufacturer LOTTO.

Mariana S.A. markets under the brands 3 Gorditos, Far West, and Pegaso. These have two outstanding complementary product lines: Pegaso, intended for heavy-duty tasks requiring shoes with high-resistance properties, and Lotto Works, known for its comfort and esthetics for safety footwear.

The company has a factory and warehouse area of 10,000 square meters with state-of-the-art machinery for the manufacture of footwear. It is **IRAM 3610 and ISO 9001 certified** and has an **annual production capacity of 350,000 pairs**.

“We are a manufacturing company that is constantly evolving and facing new challenges to satisfy the market. We can easily adapt to meet consumer demands and thus provide high-quality, comfortable, and safe products,” says Mr. Coray. “We have more than forty years of proven track record that endorse us as a manufacturer of safety footwear. The brands we produce are always innovating and evolving to meet the demand,” he concludes.

The company's new challenge is to enter the European, American, and Asian markets.

Marcos Escola, quality manager in charge of the testing laboratory of INTI's Department of Technologies for Leather and Footwear Production, comments that in the case of this specific sector, different tests are conducted to assess compliance with the requirements and technical specifications for safety footwear according to IRAM standards or European standards such as UNE EN ISO.

INTI also offers footwear manufacturers technical assistance and testing capacities on the new products being developed, assessing the regulatory requirements in their efforts to design a product that will enhance the safety and comfort of those who wear it, and the companies' competitiveness in both the domestic and the export markets.



According to data provided by the Center for Production Studies, the footwear industry in Argentina is projected to grow steadily. In 2022, the manufacture of garments, leather, and footwear increased by 12% compared to 2021, being the footwear sector the one that experienced the highest rate with 21.1% of the total.

Mariana S.A.

Manufacturing plants in Mendoza, San Juan, and La Rioja

Production of professional workwear and industrial safety footwear

• HS CODE (NCM):

-6403.40 / Other footwear with rubber, plastic, leather, or composition leather soles and leather uppers with protective metal toecaps.



• International technical cooperation



The Kaizen TANGO project began in 2017 as a bilateral cooperation initiative between the governments of Japan and Argentina. This is the fifth year of this joint endeavor between the Argentine ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy—through the Secretariat of Industry and Productive Development—the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and INTI. Our current goal is to provide more than 100 Argentine companies with technical assistance and guidance in the Kaizen philosophy, a Japanese method known as a continuous improvement process.

Among the participating pilot companies, there are case studies that bear witness to the improvements that can be introduced in the footwear and clothing sector. For instance, after applying this methodology, an SME from the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires that manufactures personal protection footwear

• INTI's capabilities for international markets



INTI has more than fifty years of proven track record in technical assistance, research, and development devoted to the sustained support of industries and SMEs in the tanning, footwear, and leather manufacturing sectors in general.

From its specialized center, it works to increase productivity, quality, and the inclusion of innovative technologies in the sector, focusing on the rational use of natural resources, the preservation of the environment, and the quality requirements demanded by the markets and the applicable regulations.

The company's extensive proven track record in working with SMEs in the sector has provided the professional technical staff with a vast working background to improve the environmental performance of the leather



(safety shoes, slippers, military clothing, and uniforms) introduced minor changes that led to significant results with little investment. Only seven months after a redistribution process was implemented in the factory, rework rate decreased by 99% and transportation time was cut by 95%.

In another case study, INTI worked with an SME from the province of Santa Fe, which manufactures footwear for adults and children. Mainly due to a layout redesign, the implementation of 5S activities, and the work on staff motivation, a 25% increase in daily production was achieved. These improvements lay a solid foundation for the business strategy to increase production and sales volume.

Every year, the Project hosts twenty pilot companies, mostly national SMEs, which are able to make substantial changes with the support of INTI and Japanese experts. However, the core aspect of the process is achieving a culture transformation, so these changes can be maintained over time.

tanning, retanning, or finishing process, as well as the handicraft production related to leather goods, footwear, saddlery, and local rope manufacture, the redesign of products aimed at improving their environmental performance, and the reuse of waste from leather goods workshops.

INTI also has a Human Resource and Technology Training Center for the Footwear Industry (CEFOTECA, Centro de Formación de Recursos Humanos y Tecnología para la Industria del Calzado), which offers courses and training in leather manufacturing to support different productive actors, such as micro-entrepreneurs, artisans, designers, and small producers for the chain. These courses include visits to INTI's laboratories and tanning plant. Also, specifically designed training courses include the use of machines and equipment to manufacture each particular leather item.

The aim is to transfer knowledge and provide comprehensive assistance to the technical staff involved in the process to meet the demand for labor and train qualified technicians in all the links of the production process.

INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

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