

Concept Note

Background:

The history of Fire Services in India is more than two hundred years old, "The great fire of Bombay occurred in 1803 and the first nucleus of fire service in India took shape, with police being entrusted with firefighting jobs. In 1822, the fire service in Calcutta was organized under the Calcutta Police.

Fire services in India come under the 12th schedule of the Constitution under the provisions of Article 243W of the Constitution, the performance of functions listed in the 12th schedule comes under the domain of municipalities. Presently, fire prevention and firefighting services are organized by the concerned states, Union Territories (UTs) and ULBs.

The role of the Fire service has dramatically changed over the years and presently the Fire and Emergency Services is called to respond almost any/ all kind of emergencies viz. hazardous material incidents, high angle rescue and confined space rescue incidents, trench and collapse operations, underwater rescue and much more in addition to their conventional role of Fire Fighting and Rescue.

The fast pace of industrialization in Gujarat with the extensive use of hazardous materials/ chemical and increased construction of multi-storied buildings, especially in urban areas, has not only enhanced the risks due to fire accidents but has also put tremendous strain on the operational abilities of fire personnel. Ahmedabad Fire and Emergency Services (AFES), receive about 3500 Fire and Emergency Rescue related calls every year for the areas under their jurisdiction (As per CFO, AFES). Data on fire calls for the state is unavailable, however, based on the number of AFES, it may be assumed that the number would be huge.

Further, in the aftermath of any disaster, the immediate mobilization and deployment of trained fire personnel for search and rescue operations is critical for survival of disaster affected victims. The Fire and Emergency Services have, therefore, to be developed as Multi-Hazard Disaster Response Force capable of acting as first responders in all types of emergency situations. In addition, the fire hazards in rural areas require appropriate types of emergency situations. In addition, the fire hazards in rural areas require appropriate types of fire-related trainings.

Legal mandate:

As mentioned earlier, Fire Service comes under the 12th schedule of the Constitution dealing with Municipality functions. At present, fire prevention and firefighting services are organized by the concerned States and Union Territories (UTs), and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in the country. Director of National Disaster Response Force and Civil Defense (NDRF & CD, Fire Cell), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) renders technical advice to the States, UTs and central ministries on fire protection, and legislation.

In view of the short comings in the fire service in different states of the country and the need to upgrade it, the GOI in 1956 formed a Standing Fire Advisory Committee (SFAC) under the MHA with a mandate to examine the technical problems relating to fire services and to advice the GOI for speedy development and upgradation of fire service all over the country which was renamed as Standing Fire Advisory Council (SFAC) in 1980. This council has representation from each state fire service, as well as representation from Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Defense (MOD), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoT), Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

Gujarat State Disaster Management Act, 2003 mandated Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority to carry out mitigation and preparedness activities against any hazard including Fire and Build the Capacity of the state towards the same.

Further, Government of Gujarat has enacted Fire Prevention and Life Safety Measures Act, 2013, Gujarat Fire Prevention and Life Safety Measures Rules, 2014 and Gujarat Fire Prevention and Life Safety Measures Regulation, 2016 to ensure effective provisions for the Fire Prevention, Safety and protection in the state through Directorate.

GIDM Intervention:

Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management and Directorate of Gujarat State Fire Prevention Services has entered into an MoU for

1. Joint Development and Delivering of Prioritized Training Programmes on Fire Prevention and Life Safety Management.
2. Strengthen Fire Prevention and Life Safety Management Training Capacities.
3. Support and promote Fire Prevention and Life Safety Management Knowledge, Good Practices and Joint Projects.

Aim & Objective:

At the end of this training participants will be able to understand:

1. Preparedness needs for response to fire hazard.
2. Operation and maintenance of various Fire Fighting and Rescue equipment.
3. Basics of Gujarat Fire Prevention and Life Safety Measures Act, Rules and Regulations.

Target Group:

1. Firemen working in Municipalities and Municipal Corporation in the state.

Schedule:

A detailed schedule is available in Annexure- 1.