

Concept Note on Fire Prevention & Life Safety Management Training

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 advise 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.

In addition, there are provision to strictly follow **National Building Code (NBC) Part 4 (Fire and Life Safety)** in various statutes / Guidelines to make sure effective provisions for the Fire Safety.

Gujarat Fire Safety Compliance Web Portal (GUJ FIRE SAFETY COP):

In order to organize conscious, planned and determined efforts to improve fire prevention, life safety and fire protection measures in the buildings/ premises, Government of Gujarat under the able leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Vijay Rupani took a significant decision to introduce an online citizen friendly end to end solution i.e. 'Gujarat Fire Safety Compliance Portal (GUJ FIRE SAFETY COP)'. The portal is a landmark initiative of the Government of Gujarat which aims at strengthening the fire-safety framework across the state.

The portal will be comprehensive in nature for making the Fire Safety Certificate (earlier known as Fire NOC) application approval and renewal entirely online (i.e. <https://gujfiresafetycop.in/>) to minimize the hassle of applicant and bring the transparency in the system. The portal will provide a complete solution starting from facilitation and empanelment of FSOs to approve & renew the FSC along with provision of online payment. The portal will also help the state government in monitoring the compliance level of FSC approval and renewal in the state.

The initiative is spearheaded by the Urban Development and Urban Housing Department (UD&UHD) with active support from **Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM)**,

Directorate of State Fire Prevention Services (SFPS) and Gujarat State Institute for Fire Safety Training (GSIFST). The contribution of Regional Fire Offices (RFOs) and Chief Fire Offices (CFOs) across the state for the initiative was also very productive.

The initiative for renewal of Fire Safety Certificate will be achieved by a cadre of Fire Safety Officers (FSOs) for which necessary amendments have been made in the Gujarat Fire Prevention & Life Safety Measures Act, 2013; Gujarat Fire Prevention & Life Safety Measures Rules, 2014; and Gujarat Fire Prevention & Life Safety Measures Regulations, 2016. The amendments/notifications in the same are enclosed herewith for ready reference.

Three (3) grades of FSOs (i.e. General, Advance & Specialist) are going to be trained and enrolled for different categories of buildings/premises, which they can inspect/ and renew the FSC. The categorization of buildings is depending on the type/category of building and fire hazards inherent in that building.

Training and Enrolment of Fire Safety Officer (FSO), is one of the components of the project and GIDM has been entrusted with the responsibility of Capacity building of FSOs by the Government of Gujarat.

Gap Analysis:

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), GOI through SFAC took stock of the status of Fire Service in the Country based on the SFAC prescribed norms for the establishment of Fire Services which indicates setting up of Fire Stations based on population, response time, requirement of manpower, equipment etc. in the year 2012, Based on the study the overall deficiency in the country in the terms of number of fire station is 97.54%, in terms of firefighting and rescue vehicles is 80.04% and in terms of fire personnel is 97%, respectively , which is quite alarming. Further, there is the huge deficiency in terms of good fire training facility in the country. There has been very little planned and determined effort to revamp it.

Also, there is a significant gap in capacity development- No regular provision for training and retraining of existing resources.

GIDM Interventions:

It is highlighted in the gap analysis that, there is a dire need of capacity building and training in Fire Safety area. Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM) as a state of an apex institute for Disaster Management may intervene and fulfil the required need.

GIDM also has been entrusted by the responsibility of capacity building of Fire Safety Officer by the Government of Gujarat. Considering the importance and need to address this issue related to capacity building in this field GIDM is organizing this program with the aim to enhance the knowledge and improve fire prevention and management practices of fire professionals.

Methodology:

The 5-day training methodology includes: a series of interactive lectures, power point presentation, directive for small and large group discussion, field project work. Handouts with relevant essential documents for the program and instruction for facilitator and trainees will be shared during the program.

Note: 5 hours online course will be made mandatory to all the participants before appearing for the training program. Certification will be awarded after successfully completion of Project Work.

Course Content:

- Fire Science and Combustion
- Fire Service setup, Firefighting Procedures & Fire Brigade Features in Buildings:
- Overview of National Building Code Part-4 (Fire and Life Safety)
- Fire Safety Legislation & Enforcement
- Mock drill
- Introduction to FSCOP System

Target Group:

Station Officer and above level officers working with municipalities, Municipal Corporation.