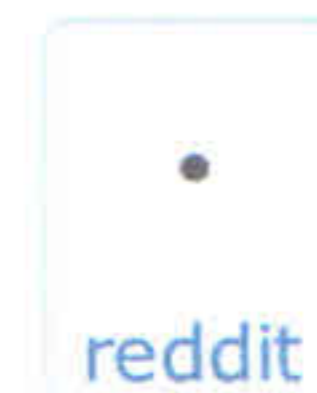


# Andheri fire aftermath: Maharashtra government wants heliports on high-rises

Sunday, 27 July 2014 - 7:10am IST | Agency: DNA

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On July 18, a fireman was killed and nearly 20 of his colleagues injured in a major blaze at the 22-storey Lotus Business Park in Andheri. Coast Guard

The state government's urban development department is drafting a proposal to make it compulsory for all high-rises that are more than 150-200 metres tall to have heliports on their terraces, enabling better handling of fire emergencies. The department has sought suggestions from the Maharashtra Fire Service (MFS), a separate body under the government. "We will be submitting a report to the UD department in the next 15 to 20 days," said MV Deshmukh, director, MFS.

**What triggered the move?**



choppers were used to rescue a few firefighters

The MFS director was speaking at a meeting organised by members of the Fire Protection Association of

India (FPAI) to discuss the need for new standards in fire protection regulations to be implemented, days after a fireman was killed and several others were injured in a massive blaze at Lotus Business Park, Andheri. Deshmukh said that if the proposal is approved by the government, it will be implemented across the state.

#### **Have any corrective measures been taken since the Andheri fire?**

"We are carrying out random checks. So far we have conducted random inspections in 53,000 buildings," said Deshmukh, adding that there were no prosecutions since all buildings who were found not complying with fire safety rules were served notices, after which they did the same within the stipulated 120 days. The association also presented a cheque of Rs 11 lakh to the family of deceased fireman Nitin Ivalekar.

#### **What else can be done?**

Nitin Shah, president of the FPAI, said, "There is a need for stringent implementation of fire protection laws not just in Mumbai but the entire state. The government needs to look into this and bring in new law as early as possible to protect the common man. Deshmukh also admitted that unionisation in the fire brigade is a hindrance.