THE FIREMEN LIFT TRAP & OTHER ELEVATOR TRUTHS

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Omckar Desae

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To everyone, team members, vendors, consultants, and builders who strive every day to make elevators safer and more reliable, this book is dedicated to you.

~ Omckar Desae

Foreword

I have spent over four decades in the elevator industry, building teams, leading projects, and watching the industry evolve from mechanical beginnings to modern innovation.

In those years, I have seen one truth remain constant: the real foundation of every successful project is not the machinery, but the clarity, honesty, and service attitude behind it.

When Omckar told me he was writing a book to bring more transparency and awareness to the subject of Firemen Lifts and other elevator systems, I felt proud — because our industry truly needs it.

Over the years, I've seen too many projects delayed or reputations damaged because of incomplete knowledge, misplaced trust, or shortcuts taken under pressure. This book is a much-needed mirror for everyone involved, a reminder that the smallest decisions, when misunderstood, can create the biggest impact.

Omckar has combined his on-site experience, technical understanding, and passion for problem-solving to create something very rare: a book that simplifies a complex subject while staying grounded in reality.

The Firemen Lift Trap & Other Elevator Truths is not just about lifts — it's about responsibility, safety, and professional pride. It is for every builder, consultant, and project leader who wants to work with clarity and deliver without compromise.

I hope this book inspires our industry to move beyond price wars and paperwork, and towards genuine understanding and collaboration.

~ Nirav Desai

Former Director – Operations, TKE India

Founder, Kare Elevator

Over 40 Years in the Elevator Industry

Why I Wrote This Book

Most people see elevators as just another product, something technical to be bought, installed, and forgotten. For me, they represent something far more important.

I wanted to write this book so I could stop talking about price and start talking about truth.

Over the past several years, I've personally interacted with more than 2,000 builders, architects, and consultants, and installed over 1,000 elevators, including hundreds of customized lifts across residential, commercial, and redevelopment projects.

And every single conversation, whether at a site, office, or coffee table, eventually circled back to the same three questions:

- "Why do lift prices vary so much?"
- "Why does every vendor say they're compliant?"
- "And why do we still face OC delays even after paying for a 'Firemen Lift'?"

That's when I realized the real problem isn't lifts. It's clarity.

The Turning Point

When the Firemen Lift category first became mandatory, the market exploded.

There was one monopoly company that ruled the space, charging sky-high prices, creating panic, and making builders believe they had no choice. Then came the crash.

Overnight, dozens of smaller vendors entered the market promising the same compliance at one-third the cost. The result?

- Half-completed lifts.
- Pending approvals.
- False certificates.
- Projects delayed.
- Genuine builders stuck between chaos, CFO deadlines, and confused consultants.
- Projects where lift shafts were ready, but the Firemen Lift wasn't approved.
- OC dates missed.
- Towers completed, yet handovers delayed for months.
- Developers spending 20–25 lakhs extra trying to "fix" what could've been done right the first time.

And what hurt most, even honest local companies, with good intentions, ended up trapped by this system.

They underpriced to survive, overpromised to get orders, and in the process, lost client trust and sometimes their business.

That was the moment I decided someone had to tell the story honestly.

What This Book Is Really About

This book is not about selling elevators.

It's about helping builders, architects, and decision-makers see the traps before they fall into them.

It's about showing:

- Why the lowest quote often becomes the costliest mistake,
- How to identify real compliance vs paper compliance,
- Why installation is easy, but service defines your reputation.
- And how proof, not promise, should guide every elevator decision.

I call this book The Firemen Lift Trap & Other Elevator Truths because what started as a single compliance requirement has now exposed a much deeper issue: How our industry thinks about trust, timelines, and technology.

My Mission

My mission has always been simple:

To give customers good quality products, backed by great service, and to win their hearts through honesty and reliability.

Through this book, I want every builder, developer, and architect to feel one thing:

That I was useful.

That I simplified what others complicated.

That I helped them make safer, smarter, and more confident decisions — whether or not they choose to work with me immediately.

If, after reading this book, you think, “Finally, someone explained this honestly,” then my purpose is fulfilled.

Because in an industry where everyone is shouting about price, I’d rather be remembered as the one who spoke about peace, proof, and partnership.

A Note Before You Begin

You’ll find stories, insights, and truths in these pages, some uncomfortable, some eye-opening, all real. I’ve written them from experience, not theory.

And I’ve written them not just for my clients, but also for my competitors, because I believe our industry deserves better.

My only request is this:

As you read, reflect on your own projects. Think of the decisions that went right… and the ones that didn’t.

And by the end of this book, if you find yourself asking better questions before your next elevator project, this book will have done its job.

Thank you for reading.

Thank you for building.

And thank you for caring enough to look beyond the brochure.

~ Omckar Desae

Customised Elevator Design & Safety Expert

Director, ICARE Lift System

CHAPTER 1

THE RISE, THE MONOPOLY & THE CHAOS

A few years ago, a new phrase began echoing through project meetings, consultant reports, and WhatsApp groups of builders:

"Firemen Lift mandatory."

- At first, nobody knew what it really meant.
- Some believed it was just a normal lift with a different name.
- Some assumed it needed a red button and a fireproof door.
- And a few, guided by fear of CFO approval delays, were ready to pay whatever it took just to tick the box.

That fear gave birth to a new category and a new monopoly.

The Monopoly Era

When the rule came in, there was just one company that claimed to supply "CFO-approved Firemen Lifts." They spoke the right jargon, produced convincing certificates, and most importantly, promised smooth approvals.

Within months, the industry began to believe Firemen Lifts = that company. Prices tripled overnight. Small and mid-sized developers started cutting corners elsewhere just to fit this "compliance cost" into their budgets.

Architects and PMCs had no benchmark to compare with, so they simply followed.

It became less about elevators and more about survival.

Those who couldn't afford them tried to "manage" with partial upgrades:

a normal passenger lift, a thicker door, a red switch, and a hope that the CFO officer wouldn't notice.

For a while, it worked.

Until the inevitable collapse.

The Collapse

The monopoly vendor, stretched thin with orders and struggling with delivery timelines, began defaulting. Sites where lifts were "ready for dispatch" saw only partial materials arrive.

Certificates came first, equipment later, or never. Projects that were supposed to get OC in 90 days waited for over a year.

Some builders paid advances for entire lifts that never got installed.

Some had cabins stuck in warehouses, doors on different sites, and motors in transit.

And the worst hit were those who trusted blindly, because the entire compliance depended on a single supplier's paperwork.

When the company finally crumbled under its own weight, it left behind a trail of incomplete projects, unpaid vendors, and confused developers caught between RERA deadlines, CFO rules, and mounting bank pressure.

The monopoly was over, but the damage had already spread across the market.

The Aftermath

The vacuum it created was instantly filled by **hundreds of small, local lift vendors.**

Each claimed to provide the same "Firemen-compliant" lift for one-third the price.

Builders, desperate to move ahead, welcomed them.

But with that came a new kind of chaos:

- No standard specifications.
- No clear understanding of CFO requirements.
- Certificates copied and modified without audits.
- Service teams without training or tools.

Everyone was in a rush to install, but no one was thinking long-term. It was the classic Indian building-industry reaction: *"Chalo kaam ho jaaye pehle."*

And thus began the era of false compliance, where lifts looked compliant on paper, but failed when checked by independent authorities.

The Builder's Burden

In the years that followed, many honest builders found themselves trapped between regulations they didn't write and vendors they couldn't trust.

Some had completed entire towers, only to discover that their installed lifts weren't CFO-approved.

Others received notices asking for additional documents, missing tests, or unclear certificates.

Every week lost meant more interest cost, more pressure from buyers, and more sleepless nights.

For some, the cost of rework went beyond money; it dented reputation.

In one case, a developer spent ₹ 10 lakhs more re-installing a proper Firemen Lift after OC rejection.

In another, a project delayed by six months led to financial penalties from home buyers under RERA.

These were not isolated incidents; they were symptoms of a larger disease:

lack of clarity and accountability in our elevator ecosystem.

What I Learned Watching It Unfold

During this phase, I met both sides of the story:

- Builders genuinely trying to do the right thing.
- Vendors genuinely trying to survive.

Everyone wanted to deliver, but the system rewarded shortcuts.

Those who priced honestly lost orders. Those who overpromised got orders—and lost credibility later.

As I watched the same pattern repeat across city after city, I realised:

The real problem isn't technology or pricing.

The real problem is trust without verification.

And that, right there, is the first Firemen Lift Trap, believing that compliance is a product you can buy, instead of a process you must verify.

The Beginning of Change

The chaos had one positive outcome: awareness.

- Builders started questioning certificates.
- PMCs began asking for third-party audits.
- Architects wanted proof, not promises.
- A new wave of transparency slowly began to rise.

And this book, what you're holding now, is a product of that change.

In the chapters ahead, we'll go deeper into the traps, myths, and truths that define elevator decisions today.

We'll look at local vs local competition, the service trap, and the real compliance framework that separates genuine systems from temporary fixes.

Because understanding the past isn't about blame; it's about building better in the future.

The monopoly might be gone, but the traps it created still remain.

In the next chapter, we'll look at how builders continue to walk into them, sometimes knowingly, sometimes unknowingly.

CHAPTER 2

The Traps Builders Walk Into

Every builder begins with good intentions.

You want the project delivered on time, the OC cleared smoothly, and your buyers satisfied.

Yet somehow, when it comes to lifts, the project's silent heart, even the smartest teams find themselves stuck in **avoidable trouble.**

It's not because they lack intelligence or experience.

It's because the elevator business operates in grey zones, between civil and MEP, between consultants and vendors, between design and approval.

And wherever there's a grey zone, there's a trap waiting.

Trap 1: The "Same Specs, Same Lift" Illusion

Walk into any tender meeting and you'll hear this line:

"All quotes have the same specs, just check who's cheaper."

It sounds logical, but it's the most expensive logic in the industry.

Because in elevators, what's written in the quotation rarely tells the full story.

Two vendors may write "Firemen Lift – 8 Passenger, 1 m/s speed," but behind that line could be:

- A difference in door fire rating (30 minutes vs 2 hours),
- Imported vs local safety gear,
- Original vs reconditioned control panels,
- Or a certificate printed but never tested.

In one project, a builder proudly told me he'd "saved 4 lakhs per lift" by selecting the lowest quote.

Six months later, he was paying double that in rework, because the lift failed inspection when the CFO team asked for genuine door test reports.

Saving ₹ 4 lakhs had just cost him ₹ 8 lakhs and 8 weeks.

That's the first trap:

Believing all specs are equal.

They're not.

Trap 2: The "It'll Manage" Syndrome

After the monopoly's collapse, a culture of "adjustment" emerged.

Many local vendors started convincing clients that a regular lift could "manage" Firemen compliance with a few tweaks.

- "Sir, we'll just add a red button and a backup UPS."
- "Sir, the CFO just needs the certificate — the rest is all the same."

It worked temporarily, until the verification visits began.

- I've seen projects where architects and PMCs tried to manage permissions with "paper compliance."
- In one prominent Andheri tower, the builder installed a normal MRL passenger lift, renamed it "Firemen Lift" on drawings, and waited for approval.
- When the CFO officer asked for the door test certificate and FRLS wiring report, the vendor disappeared.
- The result? Project stuck, 4 months lost, and 10 lakhs extra spent upgrading the entire system.

The second trap:

Shortcuts that promise compliance, but deliver delay.

Trap 3: The "Lowest Price, Highest Pain" Equation

Every builder knows that price matters.

But in elevators, price doesn't reveal value; it hides risk.

I once audited three quotes for the same project.

All three claimed "Firemen Lift – Fully Compliant."

The lowest vendor quoted ₹ 50 lakh, the mid-tier ₹ 52 lakh, and the highest ₹ 55 lakh.

At first glance, the client leaned toward the lowest, "saving ₹ 5 lakh per lift adds up across towers."

But here's what the audit revealed:

- The lowest quote used doors rated only for 60 minutes, not 120.

- No third-party test report, only a "vendor declaration."
- No UPS backup or ARD for 30-minute operation.
- Service period commitment? None.

In short, he wasn't selling a compliant lift; he was selling a delay.

A lift that saves ₹ 5 lakh today can easily cost ₹ 10–15 lakh in rework, extensions, and penalties later.

This is why builders say:

"We lost money not because of expensive vendors, but because of wrong ones."

Trap 4: The "Installation Done, Service Forgotten" Loop

Installation is visible.

Service is invisible, until it's too late.

Many vendors compete fiercely to win orders, but once the installation is done and the balance payment is cleared, **their priorities shift.**

The builder assumes the vendor will support them through OC, warranty, and service, but the vendor's focus moves to the next project.

I've seen elevators perfectly installed but failing within months due to poor post-installation care:

- No scheduled maintenance.
- No site logbooks.
- No backup spares.

- No service hotline that actually picks up.

When the builder calls, he hears, "Technician will visit next week."

Meanwhile, buyers complain, the consultant escalates, and the brand image suffers.

This is the Service Trap — and we'll go deeper into it in Chapter 6.

For now, remember:

Installation is a one-time activity. Service is a lifetime responsibility.

Trap 5: The "Vendor Is the Engineer" Assumption

This one's subtle but deadly.

Builders often expect the vendor to "figure out" everything — pit size, headroom, civil requirements, even the CFO drawing details.

And many vendors, eager to please, say yes to everything — even when the site isn't ready.

The result:

- Lifts installed in shafts that don't meet fire-rating clearances.
- Doors not aligned with smoke-lobby access.
- Machine-roomless designs are squeezed where space doesn't permit.

Then, when inspection time arrives, everyone blames everyone else.

- Architects blame vendors.
- Vendors blame PMCs.
- PMCs blame the "CFO circular."

The truth?

Nobody checked early enough.

A 15-minute joint review at the drawing stage could have saved months of rework.

But it never happened, because everyone assumed someone else was doing it.

Trap 6: The "Good Vendor, Wrong System" Paradox

Here's the irony: even genuine, sincere vendors fall into traps.

I've met small local firms with skilled engineers, passionate owners, and ethical intent, but they simply don't have systems.

Their challenges:

- No defined process for drawing review and compliance tracking.
- Service technicians not trained for Firemen systems.
- No checklists, no documented AMC schedules, no spare part inventory.

They start with energy but collapse under execution.

And the builder, despite trusting a good-hearted vendor, ends up stuck again.

This is where intention without process still causes pain.

What Builders Really Want

After every project postmortem, after every OC delay, the conclusion is almost identical:

"We don't mind paying the right price; we just want peace of mind."

Builders want:

- Clear accountability.
- Predictable timelines.
- Proof of compliance.
- Reliable service.

But what they often get is confusion, miscommunication, and mistrust.

This book exists to bridge that gap between **builder expectation** and **vendor execution.**

The Truth About These Traps

The truth is, these traps don't just belong to small vendors.

They exist across the spectrum, from low-cost locals to established names.

Because traps aren't created by products.

They're created by patterns.

The pattern of:

- Promising before verifying.
- Quoting before understanding.
- Approving before inspecting.

And unless we fix these patterns, even the best products will continue to fail in the real world.

The next chapter goes deeper into the root of the confusion:

The **"Local vs Local Dilemma",** how multiple small vendors compete on price, and why genuine builders struggle to identify who to trust.

Because when every brochure looks the same, and every vendor says, "We're compliant," the real question becomes:

"How do you separate the real from the risky?"

CHAPTER 3

The Local vs Local Dilemma

When the monopoly collapsed, the vacuum it left was massive, and so was the opportunity.

Suddenly, every small elevator company saw the same dream:

"We can make a Firemen Lift too."

And in theory, they could. After all, the components were available, designs could be copied, and the certificate formats were floating around on WhatsApp groups.

But in reality, **the industry turned into a battlefield,** one where pricing, not performance, became the deciding factor.

A Market Divided by Price

In the years that followed, builders were flooded with options.

One project that earlier got 2–3 lift quotations was now getting 12–15.

Every vendor claimed to be "CFO compliant," "Firemen ready," and "OC safe."

But there was one big difference: the price gap.

Vendor Type	Quoted Price (8-person Firemen Lift)	Promise	Reality
Established Local (with systems)	₹ 40 Lakhs	Full compliance, proper documents, predictable delivery	Delivers consistently, minor delays
Mid-tier Vendor	₹ 37 Lakhs	Same as others, only cheaper.	Partial materials, delays, incomplete papers
Low-cost Entrant	₹ 30 Lakhs	Certificate ready, CFO will approve.	Compliance issues, service failures, vendor vanishes post-installation

For builders under cost pressure, the ₹ 7 lakh difference seemed like an easy decision.

But what they didn't see was what came after: **incomplete documentation, delayed handovers, and missing service support.**

The painful truth:

The Indian lift industry didn't become competitive; **it became confusing.**

The Illusion of "Same Product, Same Result"

When you compare two passenger cars, you can test-drive both. When you compare two lifts, you can't.

You're forced to trust paper, specs, certificates, and promises.

And because every vendor lists the same specs: capacity, speed, pit size, drive type, most builders assume the lifts are similar.

But that's like saying all cars are the same because they have four wheels.

The difference lies in what you don't see:

- Control system quality.
- Emergency rescue system reliability.
- The door mechanism builds strength.
- Third-party certification authenticity.
- And the service infrastructure standing behind it.

In one project, two vendors quoted identical specs.

One offered **a CFO certificate "included."**

The other said, **"The certificate will be from a client-appointed third party."**

The builder, under time pressure, chose the first.

Six months later, the "certificate" turned out to be a vendor self-declaration.

The CFO team rejected it.

OC delayed.

Another ₹ 18 lakh was spent on redoing documentation and ARD systems.

The lift worked fine, the paperwork didn't.

That's the irony of our industry: a working lift can still fail approval if the process isn't genuine.

The Silent Cost of Unorganized Vendors

Let's be clear, not all local vendors are bad.

In fact, many are run by passionate engineers who genuinely want to deliver good quality at affordable prices.

But what hurts them is the lack of structure.

- Without proper systems, they become inconsistent.
- Without documentation, they can't prove compliance.
- Without trained manpower, they can't scale service.

So even when their intent is right, their execution fails, and **builders lose confidence in the entire "local" category.**

I've seen this happen repeatedly:

A builder tries one small vendor who fails to deliver.

The builder then assumes all local companies are the same.

And from then on, every new vendor starts with a trust deficit they didn't create.

That's not just one company's failure; it's a collective loss for the entire Indian elevator ecosystem.

Why Builders Keep Falling Into This Trap

The problem is psychological.

In an over-competitive market, the brain seeks shortcuts.

When faced with ten vendors offering "the same product," the easiest differentiator becomes price.

It's not because builders want cheap.

It's because they're forced to make fast decisions with incomplete information.

- Procurement heads are measured on savings, not safety.
- PMCs are judged on coordination, not compliance.
- And developers are juggling a hundred moving deadlines.

The result:

Price becomes the compass, and experience becomes the casualty.

This is how the Local vs Local dilemma sustains itself; every player chasing price, not proof.

A Builder's Realization

A developer from Navi Mumbai once told me during a discussion:

"Omckar, we're not scared of high prices; we're scared of wrong choices."

That single line captures the entire issue.

Builders don't want cheap; they want surety.

They don't want marketing claims; they want evidence.

Yet, the market has conditioned everyone to compare rates before relationships, and promises before process.

That's why this book exists: to help them break that cycle with clarity.

How to Identify a Genuine Local Vendor

If you're a builder reading this, here are quick patterns that separate genuine local vendors from opportunistic ones:

Indicator	Genuine Vendor	Risky Vendor
Certificates	Offers third-party test reports & audit flexibility	Shares only in-house documents or vendor self-certificates
Service Team	Own trained technicians with the AMC system	Outsourced or on-call local technicians
Delivery Promise	Gives a realistic timeline (8–10 weeks)	Claims "ready stock" without order acknowledgment
Transparency	Invites factory or site visits	Avoids verification or demo requests
Support Post-Handover	AMC offers + clear contact points	Disappears after installation
Attitude	Talks about risk management	Only talks about price advantage

These may sound like small details, but they define whether your project will end in confidence or in chaos.

Because when vendors compete on quality, builders win.

But when vendors compete on price, everyone loses.

The Real Victims of Price Wars

The saddest part of this Local vs Local war is that even good vendors, those who invest in process, manpower, and service, are forced to lower prices to survive.

Margins vanish, service suffers, and eventually, quality follows.

Over time, the entire industry's reputation erodes.

- Buyers stop trusting local companies.
- Consultants start insisting on "MNC-only."
- And genuine players get buried under mistrust created by others.

That's why, if you're a builder reading this, choosing a vendor isn't just about one project; **it's about who you're encouraging to survive.**

In the next chapter, we'll explore the other side of this dilemma, **the Local vs MNC illusion.**

Why some builders, tired of local disappointments, turn back to big brands, and what hidden challenges they face there, too.

Because when it comes to elevators, expensive doesn't always mean peaceful.

Sometimes, it just means a different kind of trap.

CHAPTER 4

THE LOCAL VS MNC ILLUSION

After being burned by unreliable local vendors, many builders swing to the opposite extreme.

They decide, **“Let’s go with an MNC, at least there will be no issues.”**

It sounds safe.

It feels premium.

It promises peace.

But often, it delivers something very different:

- Control without flexibility
- Cost without clarity
- And systems without service.

The Pendulum Effect

Every industry has a pendulum.

In the elevator world, it swings between two extremes:

- Local vendors → too much flexibility, no system.
- MNCs → too many systems, no flexibility.

Builders move from one side to the other looking for balance, and every few years, the market repeats the same story, just with new names.

In both cases, the result is the same:

Delays, frustration, and loss of trust.

The MNC Promise

- To a builder, an MNC brings a sense of security.
- A recognized brand name.
- A promise of international standards.
- A thick proposal file that looks credible.

But behind that logo often lies a system built for standardization, not customization.

For large commercial towers or high-rise buildings, that system works beautifully.

But when you bring it to mid-sized residential, redevelopment, or mixed-use projects, it starts to break down.

Why?

Because those projects need flexibility, and MNCs are built for scale, not agility.

Where the Disconnect Begins

The first sign of disconnect appears during design.

MNCs follow fixed shaft and pit dimensions: take it or leave it.

If your building doesn't fit those parameters, you must modify your civil structure, not their lift design.

That means extra cost, extra time, and extra approvals.

The Hidden Costs of Standardization

In one case, a builder in Ghatkopar had finalized his structure before lift selection.

The MNC vendor insisted on a 1500 mm pit: the site had 1200 mm.

The Solution?

Civil modification costing ₹ 2 lakhs and a month's delay.

And when you're racing against OC deadlines, even 30 days can feel like a year.

The Hidden Cost of "Brand Safety"

Many builders believe MNC = zero compliance risk.

But here's a hidden truth:

MNCs don't deal with the CFO or local authority paperwork directly.

Their lifts follow international standards, but local CFO teams require Indian testing formats, and the gap between those two is where confusion begins.

So, while a builder assumes "CFO approved brand," the reality is: the product may be compliant, but the documentation may not be localized.

The Result?

Weeks lost in back-and-forth emails.

Queries raised.

Certificates reformatted.

OC delayed.

The lift was fine. The paperwork wasn't, again.

The Service Myth

Another illusion is service.

MNCs often have excellent systems, but limited manpower for smaller projects.

Their focus is on major contracts: airports, metros, hospitals, and skyscrapers.

So when a mid-sized residential tower needs urgent service, you're not first on the list.

Your ticket enters a queue. The SLA response is 48–72 hours, not 4–6 hours.

I've seen builders with lifts ready for handover, but waiting a week for a minor adjustment or safety lock inspection, simply because the service team was overloaded.

And when the OC inspection date is fixed, that's not just frustrating, it's terrifying.

Why Builders Keep Returning to Local

After facing these challenges, many developers quietly switch back to local vendors again, hoping to find a "professional yet flexible" alternative.

And the cycle begins again.

The truth is, the problem isn't MNC or Local.

The problem is choosing without clarity.

Because what builders truly want isn't a brand name, it's peace of mind.

They want:

- Proof of compliance
- Timely service
- Customization when required
- And accountability when things go wrong.

None of that depends on whether the vendor is an MNC or a Local.

It depends on **how organized their system is and how transparent their process is.**

The Brand That Couldn't Deliver an OC

A renowned developer in Pune once shared his experience.

He chose a top global brand for Firemen Lifts, paid a premium, and trusted the name.

When the OC time came, the CFO's office asked for the fire-door test certificates in IS format.

- The brand had European EN certificates, but not the Indian IS report format.
- The CFO didn't accept it.

It took six weeks of back-and-forth emails, reformatting, and additional testing before approval came through.

The lift was world-class.

But the delay still cost lakhs in project extensions and penalties.

That's when the developer told me,

"Omckar, I paid for peace of mind and got paperwork panic."

Two Worlds: Same Problem

So, whether you choose a local vendor or an MNC, the issues remain strikingly similar:

Pain Point	Local Vendor	MNC Vendor
Flexibility	High, but often unstructured	Low, very rigid
Compliance	Claims compliance, often unclear	Globally compliant, locally mismatched

Documentation	Weak, inconsistent	Delayed, non-local formats
Service Response	Immediate but inconsistent	Delayed but systematic
Accountability	Individual-based	System-based, less personal
Builder Experience	Relational but risky	Formal but frustrating

Both worlds have advantages, but neither guarantees clarity, **compliance, or continuity on its own.**

That's why the next step isn't to choose sides.

It's to choose **systems over names and proof over promises.**

The next chapter moves into the core educational heart of the book: The Truth About Firemen Lifts.

Here we'll decode what real compliance looks like, why "certificates" alone don't ensure safety or approval, and what technical parameters every builder should demand.

Because once you understand what a Firemen Lift truly is, you'll never confuse compliance with marketing again.

CHAPTER 5

The Truth About Firemen Lifts

By now, one thing should be clear:

A Firemen Lift is not a product; it's a system.

It's not defined by a door color, a red button, or a label on the cabin.

It's defined by how that lift behaves when the building faces its toughest moment: fire, smoke, and panic.

Yet across hundreds of meetings, I've seen this same misunderstanding repeat:

Builders, architects, and even consultants believe that adding a few extra features converts a regular lift into a Firemen Lift.

It doesn't.

So, What Really Is a Firemen Lift?

In simple words:

A Firemen Lift is a specially designed elevator system that allows trained firefighters to access upper floors of a building safely during an emergency, even when the building's main electrical systems are compromised.

That means it must:

1. Survive a fire for a limited period.
2. Operate under backup power.
3. Able to be manually controlled by fire personnel.
4. Provide communication, visibility, and protection.

In short, it's not just a lift: it's a lifeline.

The Non-Negotiable Requirements (Simplified)

Builders often ask:

"Omckar, just tell us what makes a lift CFO or PWD compliant?"

Here's the straightforward checklist that separates marketing promises from technical compliance.

Component/ Parameter	Minimum Requirement	Purpose/Why It Matters
Fire-rated Doors	2-hour fire-rated automatic doors with vision glass panel	Ensures door integrity and visibility in smoke or flame

Cabin Materials	Fire-resistant panels (MS or SS with insulation)	Protects the cabin and passengers during rescue
Filler Weights	Mild Steel (not RCC)	Prevents shattering/ explosion under heat
Wiring & Cables	FRLS (Flame Retardant, Low Smoke) cables	Reduces smoke generation, improves survival time
Battery Backup / ARD	Minimum 30-minute operation under UPS or alternate power	Keeps the lift functional during a power failure
Firemen Mode Control	Additional COP (Car Operating Panel) on Ground Floor	Allows firefighters to take manual control
Talkback System	Intercom between the cabin, the machine room, and the lobby panels	Enables communication during rescue
Fire Extinguisher / Blanket/Sand Bucket	Mandatory inside the cabin	Basic fire-fighting readiness
Trap Door + Ladder	Required inside cabin roof	Allows top evacuation by the rescue team
Smoke Lobby Access	The lift must open into a smoke-free lobby	Prevents exposure to direct flame or smoke
Backup Supply Circuit	Independent of the building's main supply	Keeps the lift live even if the main supply fails
Load Capacity	8–10 persons or 845–1000 kg minimum	For firefighters + equipment

IoT/Monitoring Provision	Optional but recommended	Real-time health monitoring, alerts, diagnostics

Compliance: The Real vs the Fake

Now here's the hard truth: most of the lifts being marketed as "Firemen Lifts" in India today are **not** compliant in full spirit.

They're "Firemen Look-Alikes."

Here's how that happens:

- Vendors provide a CFO certificate from another project, not your specific site.
- Door certificates show a 60-minute fire rating, not a 120-minute rating.
- The UPS installed can power the lift for 5 minutes, not 30.
- FRLS wiring is used only in the control panel, not in the shaft or the machine room.

All technically partial, yet presented as "compliant."

And when questioned later by the CFO team, the builder is told:

"Sir, your lift was compliant, maybe the officer changed."

The truth?

It wasn't compliant: it was compromised.

Why Partial Compliance Is Dangerous

At first glance, these gaps look small, "just a few minutes difference in door rating," "only minor spec deviation."

But in an emergency, these small differences decide who survives.

In one audit I attended, the fire-rated door used was certified for one hour.

The test report clearly stated “integrity lost after 63 minutes.”

But a real fire incident in Mumbai lasted 95 minutes before rescue could reach the 15th floor.

The difference?

32 minutes.

That’s not just a technical issue, it’s a human one.

When a lift fails during a fire, people don’t blame specs; they blame names.

And that’s how **entire categories lose credibility.**

How Builders Can Verify True Compliance

You don’t need to be an engineer to verify whether your Firemen Lift is genuinely compliant.

Here’s a simple 5-Step Verification Process you can use on any project:

1. **Ask for the Original Door Test Certificate**
   - Must mention 120 minutes.
   - Must show door model, not just vendor name.
2. **Check for Third-Party Audit or Test Report**
   - Should be from a NABL-accredited lab.
   - Cross-verify test date and client name.

3. **Ask for Wiring Layout**
    - FRLS cables must cover the full route: panel, shaft, car top, and machine room.
4. **Request UPS/ARD Test Demonstration**
    - Lift must run on alternate power for 30 minutes minimum.
5. **Review Firemen Mode Functioning**
    - The switch must be functional.
    - The door should respond to manual command.

If even one of these fails, the lift may work, but it's not truly compliant.

The 15-Floor Fire Drill: A Reality Check

A prominent project in Andheri conducted a mock fire drill after the handover.

The so-called "Firemen Lift" tripped the moment the power supply shifted to backup.

Reason: UPS was undersized and not wired for the drive unit.

When the third-party audit happened, the vendor blamed the "client's electrician."

The builder lost 45 days waiting for re-testing and CFO clearance.

Total financial impact?

- ₹ 3 lakhs in rework
- ₹ 7 lakhs in extended interest cost
- ₹ 1 crore in lost credibility

The lift vendor is no longer in business.

The project's reputation still carries that scar.

Beyond Compliance: Building Real Confidence

As I always tell builders, compliance is not paperwork; it's peace of mind.

The goal isn't just to "get the OC," but to ensure that the lift will work when everything else fails.

That's the real meaning of a Firemen Lift.

When a builder understands that, they stop chasing certificates and start demanding systems.

They begin asking for audits, real tests, service documentation, and post-handover proof.

That's when the culture starts changing, from blind trust to verified trust.

Now that we've understood what a true Firemen Lift is and why compliance matters, the next question is:

"If the lift was compliant, why did we still face service issues later?"

That leads us to the next major insight —

"The Service Trap."

Because in elevators, **installation ends where the real challenge begins.**

CHAPTER 6

THE SERVICE TRAP

Why Installation Is Easy But Maintenance Isn't

Every elevator vendor talks confidently about manufacturing, delivery, and installation.

But when you ask them about **service after handover,** the room suddenly goes quiet.

And yet, that's the phase where the builder's real experience begins.

The Truth Few Acknowledge

→ **Installation is visible.**

Service is invisible.

→ **Installation gets celebrated.**

Service gets forgotten until something goes wrong.

That's why many vendors plan for installation like a project, but plan for service like an afterthought.

And in our industry, **that's the biggest trap of all.**

Why Service Gets Ignored

There are three big reasons:

1. **Low Margins → Low Motivation**

   Most small vendors underquote to win the project.

   Once they've finished installation and collected the last payment, the profit margin is gone.

   There's little left to invest in proper service infrastructure, trained manpower, inventory, or call systems.

2. **No Systems, Only People**

   When service depends on one or two technicians instead of a structured team, quality becomes luck.

   If the technician is busy, absent, or quits, the builder's problem is "pending."

3. **The "Not My Job" Mentality**

   Many vendors treat OC approval as the finish line, not the beginning of responsibility.

   Builders expect proactive support; vendors expect final payment.

   The relationship ends right when it should mature.

The Typical Builder Timeline

If you're a builder, you've probably experienced this pattern:

Time After Handover	What Should Happen	What Actually Happens
0–3 months	Regular checks, AMC offer, and final adjustments	Delayed visits, technician unavailable
3–6 months	Periodic servicing, safety tests	"We'll come next week," replies
6–12 months	AMC reminders, issue logs maintained	Phone numbers change, no record of issues
12+ months	Smooth transition to the AMC plan	Silence or arguments over pending payments

By the end of year one, most builders find themselves dealing with a **different technician, a new phone number, and the same old excuses.**

The Emotional Cost of Poor Service

Every elevator breakdown is not just a technical event; it's a **trust event.**

Because at that point, you've already completed the project, sold the flats, and handed over possession.

The lift is now part of someone's home or workplace.

When it fails, **the buyer doesn't call the vendor.**

They call you.

They don't say,

"Your lift vendor didn't come."

They say,

"Builder ne kharab lift lagaya."

And that one sentence erases years of goodwill.

The ₹ 0 Service That Cost ₹ 5 Lakhs

A well-known redevelopment project in Mumbai chose a local vendor who quoted 20% lower than the market.

The installation went smoothly.

The lifts ran fine for a few months.

Then, one small breakdown led to multiple complaints.

The vendor didn't respond for three days.

Residents escalated to the society committee.

Local media picked up the story.

By the time the builder intervened, it had turned into a full-blown PR issue.

He had to replace the entire service team, rebrand the system, and offer compensation.

- The cost of poor service? ₹ 3 lakhs.
- The cost of good service? It would've been ₹ 30,000 a month.

That's the Service Trap.

Why Vendors Struggle with Service

Even good vendors fall into this trap because they underestimate one simple truth:

Selling a lift once doesn't make a company successful. Serving it for 10 years does.

But service needs structure:

- **Trained technicians** who understand both electrical and safety systems.
- **Tracking systems** to log complaints and closure times.
- **Spares inventory** for quick replacements.
- **Transparent AMC structure** that builds trust instead of tension.

Without these, even the best installation eventually fails in the builder's eyes.

The Psychology of Blame

Here's what really happens behind the scenes after a service failure:

1. **Builder blames vendor.**

   "They don't pick up calls."

2. **The vendor blames the technician.**

   "He was on another site."

3. **The technician blames the builder.**

   "Power not available."

4. **The resident blames the builder again.**

   "Cheap lift lagaya."

Round and round it goes.

Nobody wins.

The lift becomes the symbol of failure in an otherwise successful project.

The Difference Between Promise and System

During sales, vendors promise "24x7 support."

But without an actual **24x7 process**, that's just words.

A real service system includes:

- Call registration and tracking.
- Escalation protocol.
- Spare management.
- AMC response guarantees.
- Regular preventive maintenance schedules.

When these are missing, even genuine vendors lose credibility.

When they exist, even small vendors look world-class.

That's the difference between a company that talks service and a company that delivers it.

The Builder's Checklist: How to Avoid the Service Trap

Before finalizing a vendor, ask five simple questions:

1. Who will handle service after installation, the same team or outsourced?
2. How many technicians are on your payroll?
3. Where is your nearest service office or spares stock?
4. Do you provide AMC reports and service logs?

5. If the lift stops on a weekend, who will respond and how fast?

You'll know in five minutes whether the vendor has a system — or just a slogan.

The Truth About Service

I've met vendors who say,

"Sir, we'll fix it whenever there's a problem," and others who say,

"Sir, our team visits every month, whether there's a complaint or not."

The second vendor always wins, not just orders, but trust.

Because builders remember service, not specs.

And societies remember response time, not certificates.

Installation builds satisfaction.

Service builds reputation.

And in an industry where one delay can cost crores, the only true competitive edge left is **reliability.**

In the next chapter, we'll talk about how smart builders create that reliability through what I call the **3C Framework: Clarity, Compliance & Continuity.**

This framework isn't theory; it's a practical way to ensure peace of mind on every elevator project, no matter which vendor you choose.

CHAPTER 7

THE 3C FRAMEWORK

How Smart Builders Stay Ahead

Every builder I've worked with, big or small, faces the same question at some point:

"How do I make sure this lift doesn't become a problem later?"

And after seeing over 2,000 client discussions and 1,000+ installations, I've learned that success doesn't depend on price, size, or even technology.

It depends on clarity, compliance, and continuity.

That's what I call the 3C Framework: the foundation behind every successful elevator project that reaches OC on time and keeps running reliably.

C1: Clarity: Know What You're Signing Up For

Most elevator issues don't start on-site; they start on paper.

Ambiguity during the quotation or approval stage leads to endless conflicts later.

When you don't have clarity, you don't have control.

What Smart Builders Do:

- Ask for a clear scope of work: what's included, what's excluded, what's the client's scope.
- Get drawing approvals before order confirmation, not after.
- Ensure power, pit, and shaft readiness responsibilities are mapped clearly.
- Fix timelines with dependencies: "x days after pit readiness," not "delivery in 45 days."

What Usually Happens:

Builders finalize based on price → site conditions change → vendor says "not in our scope" → builder says "not informed earlier."

The project loses 3–4 weeks.

And everyone blames everyone else.

Clarity saves more time than money ever can.

C2: Compliance: Don't Believe, Verify

Every vendor will say "CFO compliant."

But real compliance isn't a claim — it's a chain of proof.

You don't need to distrust vendors; you just need to ask for evidence.

What Smart Builders Do:

- Ask for 3rd-party test certificates, doors, ARD, controller, and wiring.
- Insist on audit flexibility; the vendor should allow you to choose the testing agency.

- Check certificate dates and client names.
- Conduct mock firemen mode trials before the CFO's visit.

What Usually Happens:

Builder trusts vendor's declaration → gets partial papers → CFO queries → 45 days lost.

Compliance isn't expensive.

Non-compliance is.

C3: Continuity: Build Long-Term Reliability

The final C is the one most ignored: continuity.

Every builder wants a peaceful handover and a happy society.

But peace doesn't come from installation; it comes from continuity of service and accountability.

What Smart Builders Do:

- Choose vendors with in-house service teams, not outsourced.
- Demand a service handover plan, with technician contacts and response timelines.
- Ask for a preventive maintenance schedule along with AMC.
- Keep a digital service log: every visit, every issue recorded.

What Usually Happens:

Vendor disappears after installation, builder gets calls from residents, and the cycle of stress begins again.

Continuity ensures your OC isn't the end of peace; it's the beginning.

Why the 3C Framework Works

Because it transforms the builder–vendor relationship from transactional to transparent.

When there's **clarity,** misunderstandings vanish.

When there's **compliance,** inspections sail through.

When there's **continuity,** service complaints reduce and reputations grow.

You no longer depend on luck or goodwill; you depend on systems.

That's what separates a builder who reacts from a builder who leads.

How One Builder Saved His OC in 14 Days

A mid-sized developer in Chembur faced CFO rejection because his "Firemen Lifts" lacked valid test certificates.

Instead of panicking, he used the 3C Framework:

- Verified every missing document.
- Called an independent auditor for a quick inspection.
- Got alternate door test reports validated.
- Submitted full file with corrected data.

Result: OC received in 14 days

The same CFO officer later told him,

"You're the only developer who submitted a clear file the first time."

That's the power of having a system when others rely on chance.

The Hidden Benefit: Peace of Mind Is Scalable

Once a builder applies the 3C Framework to one project, it becomes a template for all future ones.

Your team learns what to check, your consultants know what to expect, and vendors learn what not to skip.

Soon, you're not just saving costs; you're saving chaos.

That's how professional builders build consistency.

And consistency builds reputation.

In the next chapter, we'll move from framework to real examples — stories from the field, where builders who applied (or ignored) these principles experienced real wins or real losses.

Because theory only convinces the mind.

Stories move the heart.

CHAPTER 8

Stories from the Ground

Lessons Builders Never Forget (The Mumbai Edition)

Every Mumbai builder has an elevator story.

Some are of smooth handovers and proud OC clearances.

Others, of endless follow-ups, midnight calls, and heartburn that no PERT chart could predict.

In this chapter, let's look at a few moments from real projects, not to find faults, but to learn patterns.

Because when you recognize the pattern early, you can stop the trap before it begins.

The Redevelopment Rush (Mulund)

A mid-sized developer in Mulund had three buildings racing toward OC.

To save time and keep budgets tight, they chose a smaller vendor promising “fast installation, same compliance.”

The lifts arrived early, but so did the confusion.

During the CFO inspection, the team realized key documents were outdated, and the UPS backup wasn’t wired as per the approved drawing.

The site team spent days chasing corrections, nights revising files, and weeks trying to align communication between consultant, vendor, and CFO.

The project still got the OC, but only after:

- Unnecessary stress,
- Sleepless nights,
- And strained relationships with their own architect.

What was meant to save time ended up draining energy.

The "Budget Firemen Lift" (Andheri)

An Andheri project, marketed as a premium tower, installed a Firemen Lift using a vendor who claimed, "CFO ready system, sir, don't worry."

On paper, all looked perfect.

But during mock drills, the lift behaved like a standard passenger lift, not the fireman's version.

- Doors opened automatically,
- Controls didn't shift to manual
- And communication lines failed.
- The architect, PMC, and builder spent weeks figuring out the cause.
- Meanwhile, every internal meeting became tense.
- Buyers started asking questions.

It wasn't a loss of money; it was a loss of confidence.

One missed spec had shaken the builder's trust in every future vendor.

The Vanishing Vendor (Thane)

A boutique developer in Thane awarded a compact pit-less lift to a new vendor during lockdown.

The team seemed sharp, pricing competitive, and timelines short, but:

- Halfway through installation, communication stopped.
- Technicians stopped reporting, and material follow-ups went unanswered.
- When the builder's project manager finally visited the vendor's office, it was shuttered.

The builder was left with an incomplete shaft, half-delivered components, and full responsibility in front of the clients.

No major financial loss, but months of reputation loss.

When future buyers visited the sample flat, they asked,

"Is the lift working now?"

That one question said it all.

The Smart Builder Who Stayed Ahead (Ghatkopar)

A sharp builder in Ghatkopar took a different route.

- Before confirming his Firemen Lift vendor, he visited an existing site installation, verified certificates, and personally met the service engineer assigned to his project.
- He also included a clause linking delivery and inspection timelines to site readiness.

The Result?

- His project reached CFO approval ahead of schedule, quietly and confidently.
- No rush, no panic.
- Even the consultant appreciated the organized file submission.

When we spoke later, he smiled and said,

"It's not about luck; it's about checking early."

That single mindset shift saved him weeks and strengthened every future decision.

The Builder Who Changed the Conversation (Borivali)

One Borivali-based developer had faced repeated elevator issues: minor shutdowns, late service visits, and coordination gaps.

Frustrated, he decided to redesign his entire process.

Instead of asking, “Who’s cheapest?”, he began asking, “Who’s most organized?”

He made vendors explain their:

- AMC system
- Escalation plan
- And technician availability

Within months, his project teams started reporting smoother coordination and quicker responses.

No price war, no long email threads, just peace.

He later said,

“I realized our goal isn’t to manage lifts; it’s to manage peace of mind.”

The Construction Lift Chaos (Kurla)

A reputed builder in Kurla was using a construction hoist to transport workers and materials.

- As project deadlines neared, multiple teams shared the same lift.
- Without proper scheduling, breakdowns became daily events.

Tension rose, tempers flared, and at one point, concreting halted for half a day.

The issue wasn't the lift; it was coordination.

No single person owned responsibility, and communication stayed reactive.

- After introducing a daily usage plan and preventive checks, breakdowns dropped drastically.
- The lift was the same, only the system changed.

Lesson?

Technology helps, but discipline delivers.

The Pattern Builders Can't Ignore

Every story might sound different, but the outcome is identical:

Pattern	Hidden Impact
Price-based decision	Stress, rework, loss of credibility
Paper compliance only	Confusion, extended approvals
Ignoring service systems	Resident dissatisfaction, blame loops
Verification before order	Calm, predictable execution

Investing in relationships	Long-term peace and repeat projects

In short:

Projects fail not because of bad vendors, but because of unverified assumptions.

What These Stories Teach

When you look at these cases together, they tell a simple truth:

- Good builders don't avoid mistakes by luck; they design systems to avoid them.
- They understand that choosing a lift isn't a transaction; it's a trust decision. It affects deadlines, consultant confidence, brand reputation, and future sales.
- The right vendor isn't just a supplier; they're your silent partner in delivering peace.

The next chapter will get personal.

I'll share **why I wrote this book,** what I've seen over 15+ years across hundreds of Mumbai projects, and why I believe most local elevator companies (including ours at one point) fall into traps that hurt both clients and themselves.

Understanding these patterns, both from the builder's side and the vendor's side, is what shaped my philosophy of how elevators should truly be delivered.

CHAPTER 9

The Truth of Why I Wrote This Book

The Honest Truth About Local Vendors (and Ourselves)

Every industry has a mirror.

In ours, that mirror isn't made of glass; it's made of reality.

And for the longest time, we, the local elevator vendors, have been avoiding it.

I didn't write this book to preach.

I wrote it because I've lived these problems, from both sides of the table.

When I began my journey in elevators, I, too, thought like everyone else. My goal was simple: deliver fast, quote sharp, and somehow stay profitable.

Like most small companies, I believed that to win orders, I had to be the lowest.

- And for a while, it worked.
- We got orders.
- We completed installations.
- We celebrated deliveries.

But soon, I realized something deeper: we were winning orders, but losing peace.

- The more we dropped prices, the more we dropped margins.
- The more we dropped margins, the more we dropped quality and service.

And one by one, clients began losing confidence, not just in us, but in the entire “local elevator” segment.

That was a hard truth to face.

The Trap We All Fall Into

If you’re a local vendor reading this, you’ll relate.

We fall into traps that look harmless at first:

- **The Price Trap:** “If I don’t quote low, I’ll lose the job.”
- **The Promise Trap:** “Let’s say yes; we’ll figure it out later.”
- **The Service Trap:** “Once payment comes, we’ll manage somehow.”
- **The Cash Flow Trap:** “Let’s finish one project using funds from the next.”

Each of these feels temporary.

But together, they create a cycle that’s hard to escape.

And slowly, without realizing it, we end up building lifts with more compromise than commitment.

Not because we’re dishonest, but because we’re desperate to survive.

How Builders See It

On the other side of the table, I've seen how builders interpret this chaos.

To them, every delay, every service lapse, every missing certificate becomes proof that **"all local companies are the same."**

And honestly?

We created that perception.

Because while many of us are technically strong and genuinely hardworking, we often fail in the areas that matter most to builders:

- Planning
- Communication
- Consistency
- And post-handover responsibility

That's why this book isn't about blaming builders.

It's about helping both sides understand where the real problem lies, in the gaps between intention and execution.

The Moment of Realization

There was one moment that changed everything for me.

A respected builder in Mumbai once said to me after a site visit:

"Omckar, you're one of the few people who speak clearly. Everyone else just says, 'Sir, don't worry.'"

That sentence stayed with me.

Because "Sir, don't worry" had become our industry's favourite lie.

It's what we say when we don't want to admit uncertainty.

It's what we say when we don't have a process.

It's what we say when we don't have a system to back our words.

And that's when I decided:

I'd rather lose an order, being honest, than win one by creating confusion.

That single shift, from **pleasing** to **educating**, changed everything.

Why I'm Sharing This Openly

Because I've seen what happens when both sides misunderstand each other.

- Builders assume vendors are careless.
- Vendors assume builders only want cheap.

Both are wrong.

Most builders I've met don't want the lowest price; they want **clarity and accountability.**

And most vendors I've met don't want to cut corners; they want respect and survival.

The problem isn't intent.

It's the system.

That's what this book hopes to fix, not just for my company, but for every genuine local vendor trying to rise above the noise.

The Lesson I Learned

After 1,000+ installations and countless mistakes, here's the truth I've learned:

"Good elevators don't build good businesses: good systems do."

When you build systems,

- Builders sleep peacefully.
- Technicians work confidently.
- And companies grow sustainably.

That's when trust returns to the "local" space, and price stops being the only conversation.

A Message to Builders

If you're a builder reading this, know that most of us local elevator companies are trying to do the right thing.

Some have the right intent but lack the right infrastructure.

Others have good products but poor planning.

Before judging the next vendor by price, ask them the right questions:

- About systems,
- About the service
- And about the process.

That's how you'll separate those who want to sell from those who want to support.

And if you find a vendor who is honest about their limits, hold on to them.

They'll grow with you.

A Message to Fellow Vendors

And if you're a vendor:

- Stop trying to be the cheapest.
- Be the most trusted.

Because that's the only currency that compounds in this business.

There will always be a company quoting less.

But there will never be another you if you choose to be honest, consistent, and reliable.

- This industry doesn't need more promises.
- It needs more proof.

The next and final chapter is where everything connects —

the pain, the system, the truth, and the future.

We'll talk about **how builders can use this knowledge to create peace of mind on every project,** and the few steps I recommend to help them make that shift, not as a vendor, but as someone who's seen what works, what fails, and what truly matters.

CHAPTER 10

FROM TRAPS TO TRUST

How Builders Can Build Peace of Mind in Every Project

After hundreds of site visits, audits, and discussions, I've come to believe something simple yet powerful:

Elevators don't delay projects; decisions do.

It's never just the machine or the vendor.

It's the confusion between what's said, what's signed, and what's actually done.

And that's what this book was meant to fix, not just by sharing technical facts, but by helping you see the industry differently.

The Two Kinds of Builders

Over the years, I've met two kinds of builders:

1. The Reactive Builder who acts only when a problem appears.
2. The Proactive Builder, who acts early enough that problems never appear.

- Both are intelligent.
- Both are hardworking.
- But only one sleeps peacefully.

Because the proactive builder doesn't depend on promises, they depend on process.

- They ask better questions.
- They check documents early.
- They insist on clarity and accountability.
- And they partner with vendors who think long-term, not short-term.

That's how peace of mind is built, not through luck, but through systems.

How Builders Can Build That System

Here's a simple 4-step playbook, built from years of trial, mistakes, and transformation.

Step 1: Clarity Before Confirmation

Don't treat the elevator quote like a routine item.

Ask for drawings, dependencies, readiness checklists, and responsibilities in writing.

The earlier you demand clarity, the faster your project moves forward.

Step 2: Proof Before Promise

Never assume compliance, verify it.

Ask for test reports, past installations, and flexibility for third-party audits.

A genuine vendor will never hesitate to show proof.

Step 3: System Before Service

Check if the vendor has an in-house service structure, trained manpower, and complaint logging.

A company that tracks service shows they take accountability seriously.

Step 4: Relationship Before Renewal

Your vendor is not a one-time supplier; they're your long-term partner in reliability.

Choose those who solve problems, not just those who quote the lowest.

That's the partnership that compounds value over the years.

Why This Matters More Today Than Ever

Mumbai's construction landscape is changing fast, with tighter timelines, stricter CFO requirements, and higher buyer expectations.

Delays, however small, ripple across the project.

Today, **builders are no longer judged by how tall they build, but by how smoothly they deliver.**

And elevators, though just one line item, often decide whether that delivery feels peaceful or painful.

That's why clarity, compliance, and continuity are not technical terms; they're emotional insurance.

They protect your project, your promise, and your reputation.

From Vendor Selection to Partnership Mindset

When you start seeing your elevator vendor as a partner in your success, the conversation changes completely.

Instead of:

"Kitne mein karoge?" **(What will it cost?)**

It becomes:

"Kaise karoge?" **(How will it be done?)**

Instead of:

"Kab deliver karoge?" **(When will it be delivered?)**

It becomes:

"Kaise ensure karoge ki delay na ho?" **(How will you ensure there are no delays?)**

These questions don't just change answers: they change results.

Because when you talk about systems, you get reliability.

When you talk about clarity, you get peace.

And when you talk about trust, you get partnerships that last beyond projects.

A Personal Reflection

If you've read this far, thank you.

You've given me your most valuable asset, your attention.

I wrote this book not to sell you an elevator, but to help you make sense of a fragmented industry that affects all of us, builders, architects, and vendors alike.

And if this book helped you see the traps, understand the truths, and build clarity, then it's already done its job.

Because the real goal isn't for you to remember me, it's for you to remember what peace of mind feels like.

Now that we've explored the truths, traps, and transformations, the next few pages are my personal invitation, not as a vendor, but as an industry partner who genuinely wants to help builders, architects, and decision-makers take this clarity further.

I'll share how you can use these insights practically in your next project, or even request a personal Firemen Lift & Elevator Compliance Review Session, a 1-on-1 clarity session designed purely to help you plan better and avoid traps.

CHAPTER 11

FROM TRAPS TO CLARITY: LET'S BUILD PEACE OF MIND, TOGETHER.

If you've read this book till the end, I want to thank you, truly.

In an industry that moves fast, not many people slow down to understand what's really going wrong.

You just did.

And that alone makes you different.

Because the moment you choose to understand before deciding, you're no longer a participant in the trap; you're the one who breaks it.

Why This Book Exists Beyond the Pages

I didn't write this book for awards or visibility.

I wrote it because after working on over **2,000+ client discussions, 1,000+ successful installations,** and **hundreds of site audits,** I saw one truth again and again:

"Most elevator problems are not technical; they're informational."

The wrong decisions rarely come from bad intentions.

They come from an incomplete understanding.

So, I wanted to share what I've learned, the same frameworks, questions, and checklists I use when guiding builders, architects, and consultants during real projects.

And if this book saved you from even one wrong decision, it's already served its purpose.

How We Can Take This Forward

Here are two ways you can use this knowledge practically in your next project:

1. The Elevator Clarity Call (Free One-on-One Discussion)

A short, focused call where I personally help your team or consultant:

- Assess your current elevator design or vendor proposal
- Identify possible compliance or documentation gaps
- Suggest simple fixes to avoid delays and CFO rejections

This isn't a sales pitch.

It's a clarity session to help you see blind spots before they become bottlenecks.

- **Duration:** 20–30 mins
- **Format:** Call or Zoom
- **To book:** WhatsApp "Clarity Session" to **+91 87118 82200**

2. The Firemen Lift & Compliance Audit Checklist

If you're planning, under execution, or near the OC, request a free copy of my **Builder's Firemen Elevator Audit Checklist.**

It helps your team verify:

- Technical compliance (doors, wiring, UPS, mode control)
- Documentation readiness (test reports, certificates, drawings)
- Service preparedness (AMC plan, support handover)

A simple checklist that can save weeks of confusion and rework.

Request via email: info@icarelifts.com

A Parting Thought

Every building tells a story of design, coordination, challenges, and choices.

And hidden inside every elevator shaft is a reflection of those choices.

When you choose with clarity, you don't just lift people, you lift reputations, relationships, and trust.

Thank you for reading.

Thank you for building.

And thank you for believing that clarity still matters.

~ Omckar Desae

Customised Elevator Design & Safety Expert

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