The decisions required to provide for adequate resources are an important factor in effective emergency incident management. Command must balance the tactical problems with the resource required to control those problems and stay ahead of the situation through effective forecasting. Beware of “Crisis Management”: situation grows at a rate faster than the response rate to that situation -- Command ends up with an out of control situation and inadequate resources to control it.

Many times Command will reach a point where Command begins to debate whether to call another alarm or not - in such cases call for it. If the extra resource is not needed, it can easily be put back in service.

In most cases, Command should utilize the greater alarm mechanism -- it is the quickest, provides for automatic move-ups and indicates in a standard manner that the fire problem is in an expanded mode. Command should resist the temptation to request assistance in a piecemeal fashion. Additional alarms should be struck sequentially which includes going from a 2 and 1 assignment to a 1st alarm to a 2nd alarm, etc.

It is the continuing responsibility and function of Command to determine the resource required to control the situation and to provide for the timely call for any additional resource required. The early call for additional resource will tend to consistently save the day.

Command must be aware of both the capability and response time of additional resource and effectively integrate these facts into calls for additional resource.

Some tactical situations move slowly, while some move very quickly. Command must call for additional resource at a rate that stays ahead of the incident. Some situations require the categorical call for additional alarms or upgrading an assignment upon knowledge of particular characteristics or conditions; in other situations, Command will initiate some fire control activities, ask for reports and, based upon receipt of bad news, will strike more alarms.

When calling for additional resource, Command must expand the incident arrangement system to manage that additional resource. Command cannot encounter a big fire situation, call additional alarms and then expect to effectively manage that additional resource in a single alarm Command mode.