



GAMBIT PUBLICATIONS

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*Rec'd
6-9-83*

FOIA 83-228

May 4, 1983

Mr. Donnie C. Grimsley
Acting Chief
Freedom of Information and Privacy Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Grimsley:

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act as amended (5 U.S.C. 552).

Gambit, a weekly newspaper based in New Orleans and serving that city, has undertaken an extensive series of stories examining a broad range of utility-related issues over the past several months. Part of that process has been a number of stories examining Louisiana Power and Light Company's nearly completed nuclear power plant 25 miles upriver from New Orleans, Waterford III. Those stories have focused primarily around issues related to quality assurance problems we have reason to believe exist at Waterford. Our indications have been that those problems, which we believe are directly related to the public interest and profound questions regarding public safety, are directly related to a series of LP&L management decisions regarding basic staffing and policy issues relative to their quality assurance groups.

In that regard, this FOIA request seeks documents related to the NRC's Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) reviews. We are writing to request copies of any and all SALP documents which mention or refer to Waterford and/or Waterford 3, including but not limited to, reports, analyses, memoranda, minutes of meetings, telephone logs, transcripts, tape recordings or other documents that detail, describe or provide information of SALP inspection findings or conclusions of all SALP reviews. All SALP documents which mention or refer to Waterford, written or routed since 1979 are requested.

The FOIA also provides that if only portions of a file are exempted from release, the remainder must be released. I therefore request that I be provided with all non-exempt portions which are reasonably segregable. Gambit, of course, reserves its right to appeal the withholding or deletion of any information.

We are prepared to pay reasonable costs for the locating of the requested information and reproducing it. The amended act does provide, however, that you may reduce or waive fees if it "is in the public interest because furnishing the information can be considered as primarily benefitting the

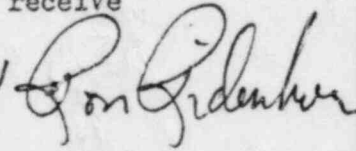
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public." Gambit believes this request plainly fits that category. All the information derived from these records and documents will be used to produce newspaper stories revolving around the question of the adequacy of Louisiana Power and Light's management decisions during the construction of Waterford 3. Since the cost of the plant has jumped from an original estimate of \$230 million to the current projection of \$2.1 billion, a sum LP&L's customers are being asked to pay, the question of how LP&L's management decisions may have affected those increases is one of keen interest to the public. It is our belief, furthermore, that a great deal of those cost increases are a reflection of extensive rework necessitated by the failure of LP&L's quality assurance and quality control programs to discover construction and design errors at an earlier stage in the process. The facts of this controversy, many of which we believe may be revealed in the requested documents, could have a direct bearing on who should bear the burden of the added costs for Waterford. We therefore ask you to waive any fees.

If you rule other wise and the fees will exceed \$100.00, please inform me, Ron Ridenhour, at (504) 895-9081, or Gambit Editor, Gary Esolen, at (504) 525-5900, before you fill our request.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please telephone me or Mr. Esolen at either number.

As provided in the Freedom of Information Act, I will expect to receive a reply within ten working days.

Sincerely yours, 
Ron Ridenhour
Reporter
Gambit