



March 2, 2001

Mr. Leonard W. Peck, Jr.
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
P.O. Box 4004
Huntsville, Texas 77342

OR2001-0797

Dear Mr. Peck:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 144650.

The Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for "a copy of the duty roster for second shift of the J-4 Unit starting from October 1, 1999" until the date of the request. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.¹

Section 552.108(b)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure the internal records and notations of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors when their release would interfere with law enforcement and crime prevention. Open Records Decision No. 531 at 2 (1989) (quoting *Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706, 710 (Tex. 1977)). When this exception is claimed, the agency claiming it must reasonably explain, if the information does not supply the explanation on its face, how releasing the information would interfere with law enforcement. Open Records Decision No. 434 at 3 (1986).

This office has concluded that section 552.108 excepts from public disclosure information relating to the security or operation of a law enforcement agency. *See, e.g.*, Open Records Decision Nos. 531 (1989) (holding that section 552.108 excepts detailed guidelines regarding a police department's use of force policy), 508 (1988) (holding that release of dates of prison

¹We assume that the "exemplars" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

transfer could impair security), 413 (1984) (holding that section 552.108 excepts sketch showing security measures for execution). The submitted shift roster reveals the staffing levels of security personnel. You claim that disclosure of this roster could compromise the physical security of the prison. We agree that allowing the public to know how many guards are on duty and where they are positioned would interfere with law enforcement. *Cf.* Open Records Decision No. 508 (1988) (holding that the disclosure of information relating to *past* transfers of inmates would not unduly interfere with law enforcement). Therefore, we conclude that the department may withhold the responsive roster information under section 552.108(b)(1) of the Government Code.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

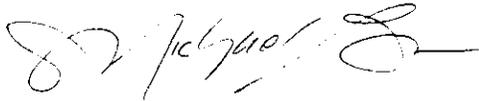
If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at 877/673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Department of Public Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.--Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the General Services Commission at 512/475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Jay Burns", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Jay Burns
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MJB/er

Ref: ID# 144650

Encl: Submitted documents

cc: CO IV Okey Aguocha
Jester IV Unit, TDCJ-ID
Rt. 2
Richmond, Texas 77469
(w/o enclosures)