



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

April 11, 2007

Ms. P. Armstrong
Assistant City Attorney
Criminal Law and Police Section
City of Dallas
1400 South Lamar
Dallas, Texas 75215

OR2007-04068

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code, the Public Information Act (the "Act"). Your request was assigned ID# 275483.

The Dallas Police Department received a request for all criminal statistics relating to certain crimes in specific reporting areas for the years 2002-2005. The requestor also seeks incident reports relating to certain crimes at the Carlyle Apartments for the years 2002-2005. You have submitted one incident report for our review.¹ You claim that the marked portions of the submitted report are excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered your claimed exception to disclosure and have reviewed the sample information.²

¹We presume that to the extent the statistical information exists, it has been released to the requestor. If you have not released any such records, you must do so at this time. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301(a), .302; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 664 (2000) (if governmental body concludes that no exceptions apply to requested information, it must release information as soon as possible).

²We assume that the "sample" report submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested reports 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.

Section 552.108 of the Government Code, the “law enforcement exception,” provides in relevant part as follows:

(a) Information held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime is excepted from the requirements of 552.021 if: (1) release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation or prosecution of crime; [or] (2) it is information that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime only in relation to an investigation that did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication[.]

Generally, a governmental body claiming an exception under section 552.108(a)(1) must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See* Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1), (b)(1), .301(b)(1); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state that the submitted report relates to a criminal investigation that is currently inactive. You state, however, that since the statute of limitations has not run, this case may be reactivated pending additional leads. You assert that the release of the marked portions of the report would interfere with the investigation. Based on your representation and our review of the records, we agree that the release of the marked information will interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976) (court delineates law enforcement interests are present in active cases). Accordingly, the marked portions of the report may be withheld under section 552.108(a)(1). We note that you have the discretion to release all or part of the report that is not otherwise confidential by law. Gov’t Code § 552.007.

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

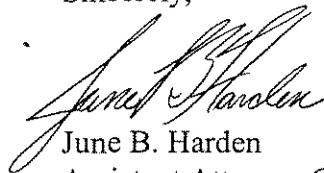
statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, 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 Dep't of Pub. 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 Office of the Attorney General 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,



June B. Harden
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JBH/sdk

Ref: ID# 275483

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Mr. Daniel Durfey
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(w/o enclosures)