



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

June 30, 2010

Mr. Michael B. Gary  
Assistant General Counsel  
Harris County Appraisal District  
P.O. Box 920975  
Houston, Texas 77292-0975

OR2010-09653

Dear Mr. Gary:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 384745.

The Harris County Appraisal District (the "district") received a request for the Texas vehicle identification numbers associated with eight different accounts.<sup>1</sup> You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.<sup>2</sup>

Initially, we note the requestor seeks only the vehicle identification numbers associated with specified accounts. Accordingly, we conclude only the vehicle identification numbers, and none of the remaining information you have submitted, is responsive to the present request for information. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request and the district is not required to release that information in response to the request.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>You inform us the district sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (governmental body may communicate with requestor for purpose of clarifying or narrowing request for information); *see also City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or overbroad request for public information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

<sup>2</sup>We assume the "representative sample" 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 those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

(a) Information is excepted from [required public disclosure] if the information relates to:

...

(2) a motor vehicle title or registration issued by an agency of this state[.]

...

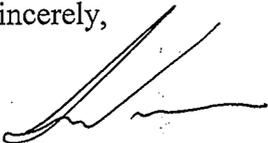
(b) Information described by Subsection (a) may be released only if, and in the manner, authorized by Chapter 730, Transportation Code.

Gov't Code § 552.130. We agree the vehicle identification numbers are made confidential pursuant to section 552.130(a)(2). The requestor states her company requires the requested information in order to provide assistance to the vehicle owners. However, the requestor is not the owner of the vehicles in question and she has not provided the district in writing that she has been authorized by the vehicle owners to receive the requested vehicle identification numbers. *See id.* § 552.130(b). Accordingly, the district must withhold the vehicle identification numbers for the eight accounts under section 552.130. As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information 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 information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index\\_orl.php](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php), or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Ana Carolina Vieira  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

ACV/eeg

Ref: ID# 384745

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)