



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 23, 2011

Ms. Judi S. Rawls
Assistant City Attorney
City of Beaumont
P.O. Box 3827
Beaumont, Texas 77704

OR2011-13819

Dear Ms. Rawls:

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# 432333.

The City of Beaumont (the "city") received a request for the hot pursuit/car chase policy of the city's police department. You state the city has released portions of the responsive policy to the requestor. You claim the remaining portions of the policy are excepted from disclosure under section 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(b)(1) of the Government Code excepts from public disclosure an internal record of a law enforcement agency that is maintained for internal use in matters relating to law enforcement or prosecution if "release of the internal record or notation would interfere with law enforcement or prosecution[.]" Gov't Code § 552.108(b)(1); *see also City of Fort Worth v. Cornyn*, 86 S.W.3d 320, 327 (Tex. App.—Austin 2002, no pet.) (section 552.108(b)(1) protects information which, if released, would permit private citizens to anticipate weaknesses in police department, avoid detection, jeopardize officer safety, and generally undermine police efforts to effectuate state laws). Generally, a governmental body claiming section 552.108(b)(1) must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement and crime prevention. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.108(b)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977).

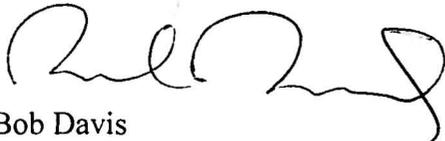
This office has on numerous occasions concluded that section 552.108 excepts from public disclosure information relating to the security or operation of a law enforcement agency. *See*,

e.g., Open Records Decision Nos. 531 (1989) (holding predecessor to section 552.108 excepts detailed guidelines regarding police department's use of force policy), 508 (1988) (holding the release of dates of prison transfer could impair security), 413 (1984) (holding predecessor to section 552.108 excepts sketch showing security measures for execution). However, this section is not applicable to generally known policies and procedures. *See, e.g.*, Open Records Decision Nos. 531 at 2-3 (1989) (Penal Code provisions, common-law rules, and constitutional limitations on use of force not protected), 252 at 3 (1980) (governmental body failed to indicate why investigative procedures and techniques requested were any different from those commonly known). You claim release of the information you marked "could jeopardize safety and would permit private citizens to avoid detection or apprehension in vehicle pursuit situations" by "enabl[ing] individuals who are evading police to anticipate officer response to various specific pursuit scenarios." Based on your arguments and our review of the information at issue, we find you have established release of the information you marked would interfere with law enforcement. The city may withhold this marked information under section 552.108(b)(1) of the Government Code.

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, 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,



Bob Davis
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

RSD/agn

Ref: ID# 432333

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)