



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

October 7, 2011

Ms. Kerri L. Butcher
Interim Chief Counsel
Capital Metropolitan Transit Authority
2910 East Fifth Street
Austin, Texas 78702

OR2011-14579

Dear Ms. Butcher:

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# 432339.

The Capital Metropolitan Transit Authority (the "authority") received a request for any and all dash camera video recordings and dispatch communications pertaining to a specified incident. You claim the submitted 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.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime." Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body claiming section 552.108 must reasonably explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). By its terms, section 552.108 applies only to a law enforcement agency or a prosecutor. This office has determined, however, that where an incident involving alleged criminal conduct is still under active investigation or prosecution, section 552.108 may be invoked by any proper custodian of information that relates to the incident. *See Open Records Decision Nos. 474 (1987), 372 (1983)*. Where a non-law enforcement agency has custody of information that would otherwise qualify for

exception under section 552.108 as information relating to the pending case of a law enforcement agency, the custodian of the records may withhold the information if it provides the attorney general with a demonstration that the information relates to a pending case and a representation from the law enforcement entity that it wishes to withhold the information. You state the submitted information is the subject of a criminal investigation being conducted by the Austin Police Department (the "department"). Further, you have provided this office with a representation from the department that states the criminal investigation is ongoing and release of the submitted information would hinder the investigation. *See Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Based on these representations and our review, we agree the authority may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(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,



Sean Nottingham
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

SN/agn

Ref: ID# 432339

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)