



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

November 19, 2013

Mr. Edwin P. Voss, Jr.
Brown & Hofmeister, L.L.P.
740 East Campbell Road, Suite 800
Richardson, Texas 75081

OR2013-20160

Dear Mr. Voss:

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# 506065.

The City of Italy (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for the video and audio pertaining to two named city police department officers from a specified date. You state you have no responsive information pertaining to one of the named officers.¹ You state you are releasing some of the requested information to the requestor. You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes, such as section 1702.284 of the Occupations Code. Section 1702.284(a) provides:

¹The Act does not require a governmental body that receives a request for information to create information that did not exist when the request was received. *See Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 563 at 8 (1990), 555 at 1-2 (1990), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

(a) Information contained in alarm systems records maintained by a governmental body that concerns the location of an alarm system, the name of the occupant of an alarm system location, or the type of alarm system used is confidential and may be disclosed only to the [Texas Private Security Board], to the alarm company to which the confidential records relate, or as otherwise required by state law or court order.

Occ. Code § 1702.284(a); *see also id.* § 1702.002(1)(A)(ii) (defining “alarm system” as electronic equipment and devices designed to detect or signal the occurrence of a robbery or other emergency). You assert the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit C is excepted from disclosure under section 1702.284. However, we note section 1702.284 is not applicable to investigative information. *See* Act of June 19, 1983, 68th Leg., R.S., ch. 496, § 1, 1983 Tex. Gen. Laws 2915. Accordingly, the city may not withhold the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit C under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1702.284 of the Occupations Code.

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: (1) 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). You state the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit B relates to a pending criminal case with the city’s police department. Based on this representation and our review, we find release of the information at issue would 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) (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). Thus, we find section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to this information. Accordingly, the city may withhold the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit B under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator’s license or driver’s license, motor vehicle title, or registration issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release.² Gov’t Code § 552.130(a)(1)-(2). Upon review, we find the remaining information contains motor vehicle record information. Accordingly, the city must withhold any discernible license plate

²The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

numbers in the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit C under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the city may withhold the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit B under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The city must withhold any discernible license plate numbers in the dash cam video recording submitted as Exhibit C under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The city must release the remaining information submitted as Exhibit C.

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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Sarah Casterline
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

SEC/tch

Ref: ID# 506065

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)